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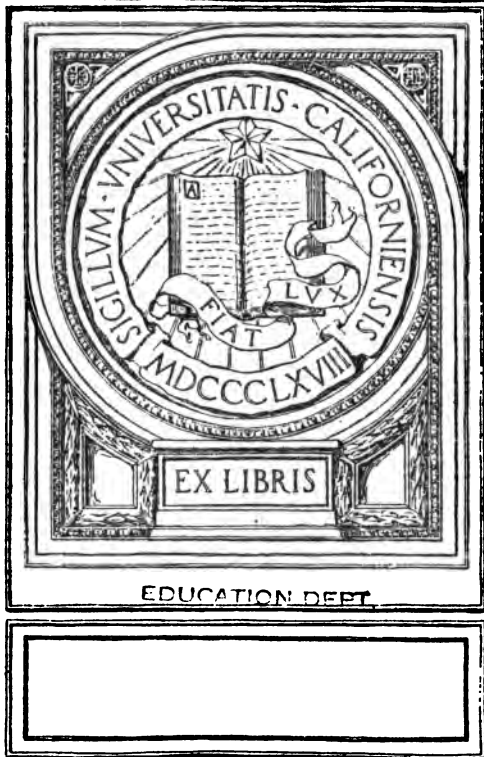
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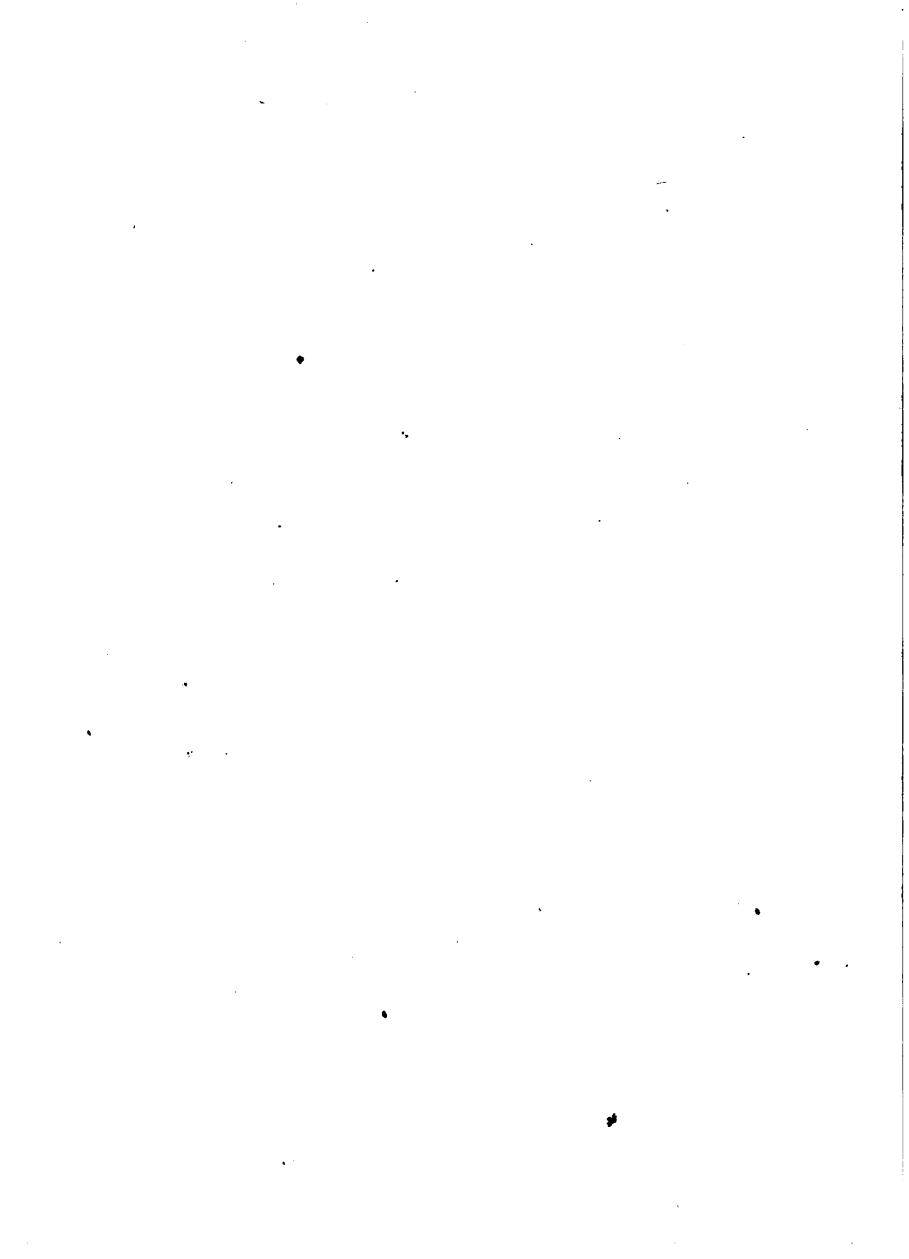
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SPECIAL METHOD

IN THE

READING

OF

COMPLETE ENGLISH CLASSICS

IN THE GRADES

OF THE COMMON SCHOOL

BY

CHARLES A. McMURRY, Ph.D.

THIRD EDITION.

PUBLIC-SCHOOL PUBLISHING COMPANY
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS
1897

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1877

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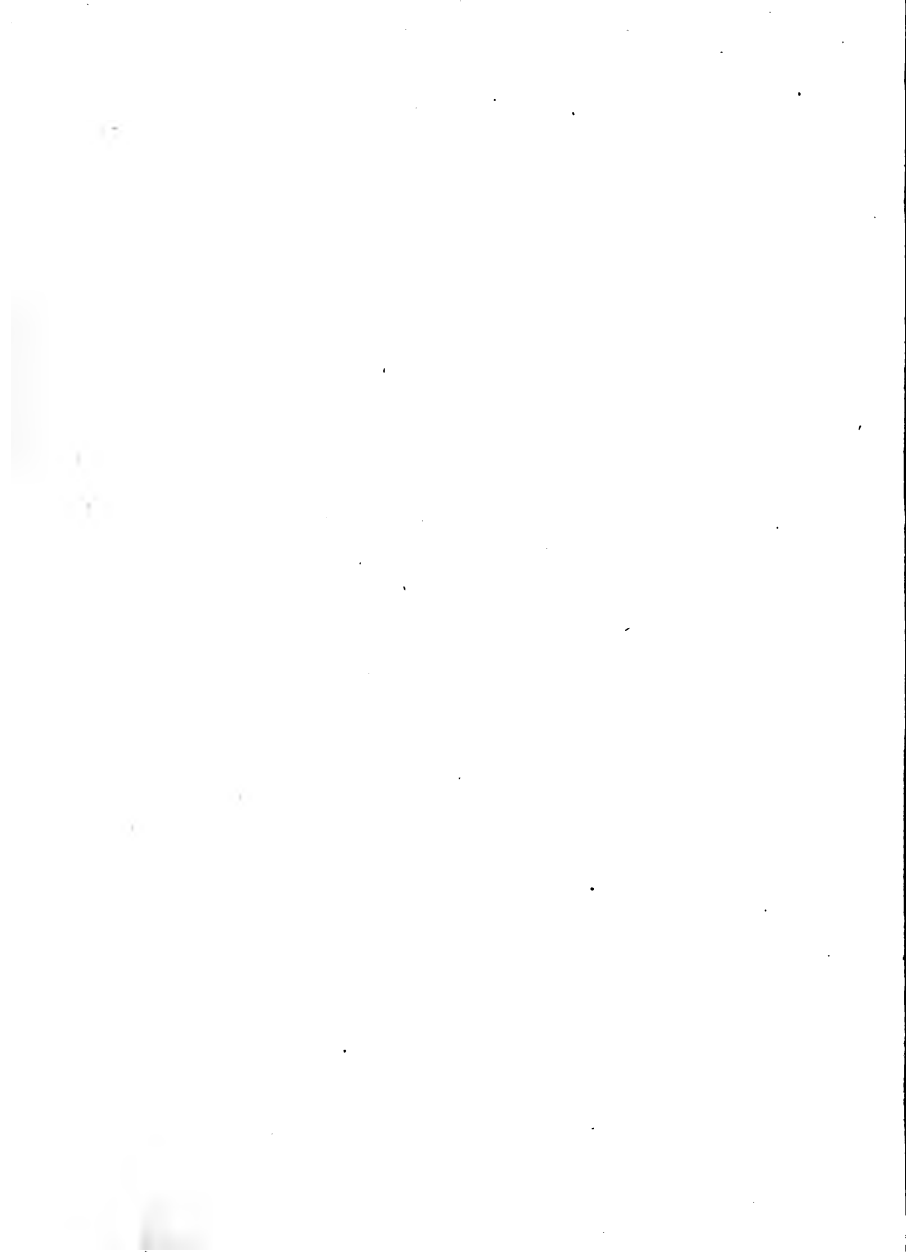
By C. A. McMURRY, NORMAL, ILL.

Press of
Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co.,
Bloomington, Ill.

This Book is Dedicated

TO THE FOLLOWING TEACHERS WITH WHOM THE IDEAS TREATED IN
ITS PAGES WERE DISCUSSED IN
ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCES IN CHICAGO. THEIR STRONG
INTEREST IN THE PROBLEMS RAISED AND
THEIR PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS,
SPRINGING FROM THEIR LONG EXPERIENCE IN
SCHOOLS, HAVE BEEN
VERY HELPFUL AND ENCOURAGING.

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PREFACE.

This little book is a continuation of the series of Special Methods, of which it is the third number. The Special Method in Literature and History is a preparation for this book. It deals with the oral treatment of fairy stories, Crusoe, and myths before the children are old enough to read them and prepares them for the reading discussed in this book.

The effort to gather into a rising series the best classic products of our English tongue and to appropriate them to direct school purposes is very inspiring. It opens up a field of great richness and culture to both teachers and children. If all our teachers in the common schools should read with thoughtful appreciation ten or a dozen of the best books in the series, it would surely improve the teaching in all our schools by twenty-five per cent.

The best literature suited to the grades has a variety of close and vital relations to nearly all the other studies as, for example, to history, geography, natural science, and language. Since literature is so elevating and so many-sided in its culture influence, it supplies a solid basis for the correlation and unification of studies now so much discussed. The other books of the series can be seen in the price list at the end of this book.

NORMAL, ILLINOIS, Sept. 1, 1895.

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CHAPTER 1.

The Value of Complete Classic Masterpieces in the Common School.

The purpose to introduce complete classics as readers into each grade of the common school is the controlling thought in the following chapters. In the first two or three grades, it may not be possible to execute fully this plan, but the inquiry to what extent it may be done, even here, is worth serious thought and experiment.

What is a classic? One of the elements that goes into its make-up is an important, underlying, permanent truth. Whether written today or perchance in the fifth century B.C., it must contain lasting qualities that do not fade away or bleach out or decay. Time and weather do not stain or destroy its merit. Some classics, as Gray's *Elegy* or *Thanatopsis*, are like cut diamonds. The quality that gives them force and brilliancy is inherent, and the form in which they appear has been wrought out by an artist. The fundamental value of a classic is the deep, significant truth which, like the grain in fine woods, is wrought into their very structure. The artist who moulds a masterpiece like *Enoch Arden* or *The Scarlet Letter* is

not a writer of temporary fame. The truth to which he feels impelled to give expression is strong, natural, human truth, which has no beginning and no end. It is true forever. Schiller's William Tell, though idealized, is a human hero with the hearty thoughts of a real man. Shylock is a Jew of flesh and blood, who will laugh if he is tickled, and break into anger if he is thwarted. The true poet builds upon eternal foundations. The book-maker or rhymer is satisfied with empty or fleeting thoughts and with a passing notoriety. New books are often caught up and blazoned as classics which a few years reveal as patchwork and tinsel. Time is a sure test. Showy tinsel rusts and dulls its lustre, while simple poetic truth shines with growing brightness.

But truth in poetic dress is an object of suspicion to many people. If it were plain, ungarnished, even ugly, they could give it a heartier reception; as being closer to the real and practical. But true poetry stands closer to real life and in quicker touch with the daily motives of conduct than people dream. How far away and unpractical to the unbeliever are the poetic truths of Scripture; how fundamental and strong and real they are when wrought into the conduct of a faithful witness. It is profoundly well with us when we see truth not only in its strength but in its beauty. It is the magic of literary artists to reveal truth to pupils and teachers in this double potency.

There is no form of inspiring truth which does not find expression in literature, but it is first of all a revelation of human life and experience, a proclamation from the housetops of the supreme beauty and excellence of truth and virtue.

Classics are of strong and lasting value to the schools because they bring out human conduct and character in a rich variety of forms corresponding to life. Against the background of scenery created by the poet, men and women and children march along to their varied performances. Theseus, Ulysses, Crusoe, Aladdin, Alfred, Horatius, Cinderella, Portia, Evangeline—they speak and act before us with all the realism and fidelity to human instincts peculiar to the poet's art. These men and women, who are set in action before us, stir up all our dormant thought-energy. We observe and judge their motives and approve or condemn their actions. We are stirred to sympathy or pity or anger. Such an intense study of motives and conduct, as offered in literature, is like a fresh spring from which well up healing waters. The warmth and energy with which judgments are passed upon the deeds of children and adults is the original source of moral ideas. Literature is especially rich in opportunities to register these convictions. It is not the bare knowledge of right and wrong developed, but the deep springs of feeling and emotion are opened, which gush up into volitions and acts.

Just as we form opinions of people from their individual acts, and draw inferences as to their character and motives, so the overt act of Brutus or of Miles Standish stands out so clear against the background of passing events that an unerring judgment falls upon the doer. A single act, seen in its relations, always calls forth such a sentence of good or ill. Whether it be a gentle deed of mercy, or the hammer-stroke that fells a giant or routs an army, as with Charles Martel or Alfred's war-cry, the sense of right and wrong is the deep underflow that gives meaning to all events and stamps character.

There is, however, a deeper and more intense moral teaching in literature than that which flows from the right or wrong of individual acts. The whole life and evolution of character in a person, if graphically drawn, reveal the principles of conduct and their fruitage. Character is a growth. Deeds are only the outward signs of the direction in which the soul is moving. A dramatist like Shakespeare, or a novelist like George Eliot, gives us a biographical development. Deeds are done which leave their traces. Tendencies are formed which grow into habits, and thus a character ripens steadily towards its reward. We become conscious that certain deeper principles control thought and action, whether good or bad. There is a rule of law, a sort of fatalism, in human life. "The mills of the gods grind slow, but they grind

exceedingly small." It is the function of the dramatist or novelist to reveal these working principles in conduct. When the principle adopted by the actor is a good one, it works out well-being in spite of misfortunes; when evil, the furies are on the track of the evil doer. Men do not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. As we move on from step to step in a life history, the sympathy deepens. The fatal influence of a false step, followed up, is keenly felt by the reader; the upward tendency of a right act inspires and lifts into freedom. But whether we love or hate or pity, the character moves on in the course which his deeds mark out. When finally he is overwhelmed in shame and defeat, we see the early tendencies and later forces which have led to this result. If final triumph is achieved, we recognize the reward of generous, unselfish impulses followed out.

As the interest in such a life-history deepens the lessons it evolves come out with convincing and overwhelming power. The effect of a great novel or drama is more intense and lasting than any sermon. The elements of thought and feeling have been accumulating energy and momentum through all the scenes, and when contracted into a single current at the close they sweep forward with the strength of a river. A masterpiece works at the foundations of our sympathies and moral judgments. To bring ourselves under

the spell of a great author and to allow him, hour after hour and perhaps for days in succession, to sway our feelings and rule far up among the sources of our moral judgments, is to give him great opportunity to stamp our character with his convictions. We seldom spend so many hours in close companionship with a living friend as with some master of the art of character-delineation. Children are susceptible to this mighty influence. Many of them take to books easily, and many others need but wise direction to bring them under the touch of the same formative influences. A book sometimes produces a more lasting effect upon the character and conduct of a child than a close companion. Nor is this true only in the case of book-lovers. It is probable that the great majority of children may feel the wholesome effect of such books if wisely used at the right time. To select a few of the best books as companions to a child and teach him to love their companionship is one of the most hopeful things in education. The boy or girl who reads some of our choice epics, stories, novels, dramas, and biographies, allowing the mind to ponder upon the problems of conduct involved, will receive many deep and permanent moral lessons. The realism with which the artist clothes his characters only strengthens the effect and makes them lasting food for thought in the coming years. Even in early childhood we are able to detect clearly what is noble and debasing

in conduct as thus graphically revealed, and a child feels an unerring judgment along moral lines. The best influence that literature has to bestow, therefore, may produce its effect early in tender years, where impressions are deep and permanent. It is our aim to choose and employ such books daily with children even of the three primary grades. There are many other elements of lasting culture-value in the study of literature, but first of all the deep and permanent truths taught by the classics are those of human life and conduct. These are the greatest and simplest problems for human souls to ponder.

Besides the moral element, or fundamental truth involved, every classic masterpiece is infused with an element of *fancy*. Whether in prose or verse the artist reveals himself in the creative touch. The rich coloring and imagery of his own mind give a tint to every object. The literary artist is never lacking in a certain, perhaps, indefinable charm. He possesses a magic wand that transforms into beauty every commonplace object that is met. We observe this in Irving, Hawthorne, Warner, as well as in still greater literary masters. Our poets, novelists, and essayists must all dip their pens in this magic ink. Even Webster and Burke, Lincoln and Sumner, must rise to the region of fancy if they give their thought sufficient strength of wing to carry it into the coming years. The themes upon which they discoursed

kindled the imagination and caused them to break forth into figures of speech and poetic license. The creative fancy is that which gives beauty, picturesqueness, and charm to all the work of poet or novelist. This element of fancy diffuses itself as a living glow through every classic product that was made to endure. In the masters of style the rhythmic flow and energy of language are enlivened by poetic imagery. Figures of speech in architectural simplicity and chasteness stand out to symbolize thought. That keenness and originality which astonishes us in master-thinkers is due to the magic vigor and picturesqueness of their images. Underneath and permeating all this wealth of ideas is the versatile and original mind which sees everything in the glow of its own poetic temperament, kindling the susceptible reader to like inspiration. Among literary masters the power of fancy shows itself in an infinite variety of forms, pours itself through a hundred divergent channels and links itself so closely with the individuality of the writer as to merge imperceptibly into his character and style. But as we can not secure wholesome bread without yeast, so we shall fail of a classic without fancy.

A fixed classic form is not always necessary. We need many of the classics that were written in other languages. Fortunately some of the works of the old poets are capable of taking on a new dress. The story of Ulysses has been told in verse

and prose, in translation, paraphrase, and simple narrative form for children. Much, indeed, of the old beauty and original strength of the poem is lost in all these renderings; but the central truths which give the poetic work its persistent value are still retained. Such a poem is like a person; the underlying thought, though dressed up by different persons with varying taste and skill, is yet the same; the same heart beats beneath the kingly robes and the peasant's frock. Robinson Crusoe likewise has had many forms, but remains the same old story in spite of variations. The Bible has been translated into all modern tongues, but it is a classic in each. The Germans claim they have as good a Shakespeare as we.

Some classic products, like the *Paradise Lost*, *Thanatopsis*, and *Hamlet*, show such a perfect fitness of word to thought that every effort to change or modify is profanation. The classic form and the classic thought go together. As far as possible, therefore, it is desirable to leave these classics in their native strength and not to mar the work of masters. The poet has moulded his thought and feeling into these forms and transfused them with his own imagery and individuality. The power of the writer is in his peculiar mingling of the classic elements. Our English and American classics, therefore, should be read in their full original form as far as possible.

But many of the best masterpieces were orig-

inally written in other languages, and to be of use to us the ancient form of thought must be broken. The spirit of the old masters must be poured into new moulds. In educating our children we need the stories of Bellerophon, Perseus, Hercules, Rustum, Tell, Siegfried, Virginius, Roland, King Arthur. Happily some of the best modern writers have come to our help. Walter Scott, Macaulay, Dickens, Kingsley, Hawthorne, Irving, and Arnold, have gathered up the old wine and poured it into new bottles. They have told the old stories in simple Anglo-Saxon for the boys and girls of our homes and schools. Nor are these renderings of the old classics lacking in that element of fancy and vigor of expression which distinguish classic writers. They have entered freely and fondly into the old spirit, and have allowed it to pour itself copiously through these modern channels. It takes a poet in fact to modernize an ancient classic. There are, indeed, many renderings of the old stories which are not classic, which, however, we sometimes use for lack of anything better.

We conclude, therefore, that a classic masterpiece must embody a lasting truth, reveal the permeating glow of an artist's fancy, and find expression in some form of beauty and strength. Having made plain what we mean by a classic and, in our lists, having indicated what classics should be chosen, we will next consider why such

masterpieces should be read as complete wholes, not by fragments or extracts, but whole works of literary art.

1. A stronger interest is developed by the study, for several weeks, of a longer complete masterpiece. The interest grows as we move into such a story or poem as Sohrab and Rustum. A longer and closer acquaintance with the characters represented produces a stronger personal sympathy, as in the case of Cordelia in *King Lear*, or of Silas Marner. The time usually spent in school upon some classic fragment or selection is barely sufficient to start up an interest. It does not bring us past the threshold of a work of art. We drop it just at the point where the momentum of interest begins to show itself. Think of the full story of *Aladdin* or *Crusoe* or *Ulysses*. Take an extract from *Lady of the Lake*, *Rip Van Winkle*, *Evangeline*: The usual three or four pages given in the reader, even if taken from the first part, would scarcely suffice to bring the children into the movement of the story; but oftentimes the fragment is extracted from the body of the play without preliminary or sequence. In reading a novel, story, or poem, we do not begin to feel the author's power till two or three chapters are passed. The interest begins to deepen, the plot thickens, and a desire springs up to follow out the fortune of the characters. We become interested in the persons, and our thoughts are busy

with them in the midst of other employments or in leisure moments. The personality of the hero takes hold of us as that of an intimate friend. Such an interest, gradually awakened and deepened as we move into the comprehension of a work of art, is the open sesame to all the riches of an author's storehouse of thought.

2. A much deeper insight into the author's purpose and meaning is secured. A great author approaches his deeper thought step by step. He has many side-lights, variety of episode and preliminary. He provides for the proper scenery and setting for his thought. He does not bring us at once, point blank, upon his hero or upon the hero's fate. There is great variety of inference and suggestion in the preparation and grouping of the artist's work. As in climbing some mountain peak, we wind through a cañon, along rugged hill-sides and spurs, only now and then catching a glimpse of the towering object of our climb, reaching, after many a devious and toilsome march, the rugged backbone of the giant; so the poet carries us along many a winding road, through by-ways and thickets, over hill and plain, before he brings us into full view of the main object of search. But after a while we do stand face to face with a real character and are conscious of the framework upon which it is built. Saul has run his course and is about to reap the reward of his doings; to lie down in the bed which he has pre-

pared. We see the author's deeper plan and realize that his characters act along the line of the silent but invincible laws of social life and conduct. These deep significant truths of human experience do not lie upon the surface. If we are really to get a deep insight into human character, as portrayed by the masters, we must not be in haste. We should be willing to follow our guide patiently and wait for results.

3. The moral effect of a complete masterpiece is deeper and more permanent. Not only do we see a person acting in more situations, revealing thus his motives and hidden springs of action, but the thread of his thought and life is unraveled in a steady sequence. Later acts are seen as the result of former tendencies. The silent reign of moral law in human actions is discovered. Slowly but surely conduct works out its own reward along the line of these deeper principles of action. Even in the books read in the early grades these profound lessons of life come out clear and strong. Robinson Crusoe, Theseus, Siegfried, Hiawatha, Beauty and the Beast, Jason, King Arthur, and Ulysses are not holiday guests. They are face to face with the serious problems of life. Each person is seen in the present make-up and tendency of his character. When the eventual wind-up comes, be it a collapse or an ascension, we see how surely and fatally such results spring from such motives and tendencies. Washington is found

to be first in the hearts of his countrymen; Arnold is execrated; King Lear moves on blindly to the reward which his own folly has prearranged; Macbeth entangles himself in a network of fatal errors; Adam Bede emerges from the bitter ordeal of disappointment with his manly qualities subdued but stronger. Give the novelist or poet time and opportunity, and he is the true interpreter of conduct and destiny. He reveals in real and yet ideal characters the working out in life of the fundamental principles of moral action.

4. A complete masterpiece, studied as a whole, reveals the author's power. It gives some adequate perception of his style and compass. A play, a poem, a novel, a biography, is a unit. No single part can give a satisfactory idea of the whole. A single scene from Crusoe or from the Merchant of Venice does not give us the author's meaning. An extract from one of Burke's speeches supplies no adequate notion of his statesmanlike grasp of thought. To get some impression of what Daniel Webster was we must read a whole speech. A literary product is like a masterpiece of architecture. The whole must stand out in the due proportion of its parts to reveal the master's thought.

“ Walk about Zion, and go round about her

Tell the towers thereof,

Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces;

That ye may tell it to the generations following.”

To have read through with care and thoughtful appreciation a single literary masterpiece and to have felt the full measure of a master's power, is a rare and lasting stroke of culture. As children move up through the grades they may receive the strong and abiding impress of the masters of style. Let it come to them in its undiminished strength. To feel the powerful tonic effect of the best stories and poems suited to their age will give them such an appreciation of what is genuine and good in literature that frivolous and trashy reading is measured at its true value.

The fragments and extracts with which our higher readers are filled are not without power and influence upon culture. They have given many children their first taste of the beauty and strength of literature. But it is a great mistake to tear these gems of thought from their setting in literature and life and to jam them into the close and crowded quarters of a text-book. Why satisfy ourselves with crumbs and fragments when a full rich feast may be had for the asking?

5. A classic work is often a picture of an age, a panoramic survey of an historical epoch. Scott's Marmion is such a graphic and dramatic portrayal of feudalism in Scotland. The castle with its lord, attendants, and household, the steep frowning walls and turrets, the moat, drawbridge, and dungeon, the chapel, halls and feasting, the knight clad in armor, on horseback with squire and

troop,—these are the details of the first picture. The cloister and nuns with their sequestered habits and dress, their devotion and masses, supply the other characteristic picture of that age, with Rome in the background. The court scene and ball in king James' palace, before the day of Flodden, the view of Scotland's army from the mountain side, with the motley hordes from Highland and Lowland and neighboring isles, and lastly the battle of Flodden itself where wisdom is weighed and valor put to the final test—all these are but the parts of a well-adjusted picture of life in feudal times on the Scottish border. There is incidental to the narrative much vivid description of Scotch scenery and geography, of mountain or valley, of frowning castle or rocky coast, much of Scotch tradition, custom, superstition and clan-nishness. The scenes in cloister and dungeon and on the battle-field are more intensely real than historical narratives can be. While not strict history, this is truer than history because it brings us closer to the spirit of that time. Marmion and Douglas stand out more clear and life-like than the men of history.

Although feudalism underwent constant changes and modifications in every country of Europe, it is still true that Marmion is a type of feudal conditions not only in Scotland but in other parts of Europe, and a full perception of Scott's poem will make one at home in any part of European

history during feudal times. As a historical picture of life it is a key to the spirit and animating ideas that swayed the western nations during several centuries. It is fiction, not history, in the usual sense, and yet it gives a more real and vivid consciousness of the forces at work in that age than history proper.

While the plot of the story covers a narrow field, only a few days of time and a small area of country, its roots go deep into the whole social, religious, and political fabric of that time. It touches real history at a critical point in the relations between England and Scotland. It is stirred also by the spirit of the Scotch bard and of minstrelsy. It shows what a hold Rome had in those days even in the highlands of Scotland. It is full of Scotch scenery and geography. It rings with the clarion of war and of battle. It reveals the contempt in which letters were held even by the most powerful nobles. Oxen are described as drawing cannon upon the field of Flodden, and in time these guns broke down the walls of feudalism. As a historical picture *Marmion* is many-sided and the roots of the story reach out through the whole fabric of society, showing how all the parts cohere. Such a piece of historical literature may serve as a center around which to gather much and varied information through other school and home readings. Children may find time to read *Ivanhoe*, the *Crusades*, *Roland*, *Don Quixote*,

The Golden Legend, Macbeth, Goetz von Berlichingen, etc. They will have a nucleus upon which to gather many related facts and ideas. It should also be brought into proper connection with the regular lessons in history and geography. History reveals itself to the poet in these wonderfully vivid and life-like types. In many of these historical poems, as William Tell, Evangeline, Crusoe, The Nibelung Song, Miles Standish, The Odyssey, Sohrab and Rustum, some hero stands in the center of the narrative and can be understood as a representative figure of his times only as the whole series of events in his life is unrolled.

We conclude that the use of complete classic works in the grades of the common school is to be recommended because they awaken a stronger and keener interest and give a deeper insight into the author's storehouse of thought. The moral effect of such character-delineation is powerful because it is so graphic and continuous in its sequence, and because the author has such an open field in which to reveal the full measure and compass of his power as a writer. Lastly, many of the best classics for children are graphic historical pictures of great typical significance in the history of the world.

Besides the longer classic masterpieces that we have had chiefly in mind, there is a multitude of shorter classics which should be liberally read

and studied in these grades. They should be grouped around the central predominating ideas in our series of literary materials for the grades. Many of the finest classic poems are short. But they should not stand alone. They express, in an intense form, ideas which are found elsewhere in our history and literature, and with which they should be brought into the closest relation.

CHAPTER II.

The Literature of the First Four Grades.

1. There is quite a variety of classic literature that is directly serviceable in the first four years of school. Nursery melodies, folk-lore stories and fairy tales, fables, Robinson Crusoe, and the classic myths furnish the waxing, changing minds of children with varied and stirring matter for thought.

When children begin to read in the first school year, they need the simplest material, and yet something that stirs the interest and fancy. The nursery rhymes, such as appear in Verse and Prose for beginners, and in Heart of Oak No. 1, are good because they are already partly known to the children and have excited their mirth and curiosity. To meet and recognize these familiar stories in print is to carry some of the joy of the nursery into the school-room. Some of these things are fantastic and ridiculous and even absurd to older people; but little children are by nature better judges than their sedate elders. Whatever in the shape of literature is fit for the home is fit for the school. The very fact that many of these rhymes have been familiar in the

best homes for some generations is the best proof that they are the right material for the first grade. They are often very ridiculous and fanciful, and for that reason are exactly fit to the children's need; for children are most of all appreciative of the fanciful and grotesque. Some of the best of these quibbling verses come from Shakespeare and Ruskin and Kingsley. The farcical side of human life shows itself early and late and is a true sign of health and soundness. To use these rhymes in the first grade is to conduce to the natural joyousness and delight of children. Then the rhymes and repetitions have a charm as language.

It is the first rude form of the æsthetic in literature, the harmony of sound and sense, the music of words. It is also permanent, for these simple literary flowers do not lose their aroma. We never outgrow them, as we do trivial or trashy books.

2. The helpful or harmful effect of the literature of the fancy in early years is a subject of much dispute. The opening-up of this dispute is one of the best fruits of recent pedagogical study. Shall we clip the wings of fancy in children, or shall we encourage them to unfold and carry the children gently over many a blooming meadow? The most characteristic mark in all the literature we mentioned for the first four grades is its fanciful spirit. There is scarcely any literature for the earlier grades in which the fancy is not a predom-

inating element. We noticed above that the fancy is a pervading element in all permanent literary products. But the literature of children, in its whole framework and structure, is built up by the imagination out of the real elements of experience.

We acknowledge the power and domain of fancy in the works of Hawthorne, Bunyan, Shakespeare, Dante, Goethe. Such novelists as Scott, Irving, Eliot, Dickens, and Thackeray, lead us to the real world only through the portals of fancy. We allow, then, the supreme value of the fancy in all the highest forms of literature, and yet we question the classic stories of fancy for children. There is a strong disposition among the serious-minded to draw the lines of reality close and stiff around the children, to shut them up to nature-study, to real life and history, to reduce Pegasus to a plow-horse. Many can not reconcile themselves to the fairy tale because it is such a wayward child, so blissful in its ignorance of realities.

But this period of childhood is the golden age of the fancy, the one time when the fancy holds the sole right of eminent domain. Children at this time are by spontaneity fanciful. They endow every plaything with life, they personify bird and flower and tree; they draw crude pictures and make rude machines which, through the fancy, stand for the complete realities. Without suggestion from mother or teacher they live, move, and construct in a world of fancy.

There are indeed two worlds that seem to have nearly equal hold upon a child's thoughts, the world of realities, and the world of idealities. He never tires of seeing, examining, handling, modifying, using things. But a close observation of his activities will reveal that ideas which his fancy has created are the objective points toward which he works. He has seen a river and bridge, and at home he makes a river, valley, and bridge, out of sand and sticks, not identical with the one seen, but one his fancy has created. He has heard the story of Crusoe's raft or cave, and he builds a raft or digs a cave, and arranges them according to his own notions of plan and construction. A healthy child is astonishingly active in his experimentation with material objects and in making them conform to or realize the *ideal aims* that his fancy constantly creates and sets up as guides. The classic literature which suits these early years is thoroughly saturated with fancy. It gives healthy development to a healthy impulse. The mind of a child leaps toward results, it leaps past physical barriers and hindrances, and comes straight at the desired end. It is the early supremacy of mind over matter. Later he learns the limitations, but at this early stage rejoices in this unchecked exercise of his power. But even a child is not led astray by his fancy. He is conscious of the freaks which his thought is playing, of the underlying realities which it skips over so

smoothly and gracefully. Much of the enjoyment, indeed, in fairy lore, is perhaps due to this hide-and-seek game with nature's truths. To accuse the fairy tale of dishonesty is to accuse the strongest trait of ingenuous childhood of duplicity, for the story is the idealized form of the child's thought. Why should grown people allow themselves the pleasures of imagination in the noble works of the best poets, and exclude children from such a pleasure when their whole thought and activity are enshrined in a halo of fanciful illusion?

But it is not simply that we desire to secure the children in the enjoyment of a rich feast of thought natural to their appetites. We have an eye also to the coming years, when the fancy, though subdued and regulated, still possesses strong powers of flight. These are the only wings that can carry a child, in later school years, to many a rugged hill-top or deep into many a rocky glen. The child whose mind is hitched to a vigorous fancy will scale the walls of truth at every point, while the prosaic mind, encumbered with dull realities, will stand bedumbed before impossible barriers. In intermediate and grammar grades an active and rich fancy is able to enliven the dullness of studies as an irrigating stream, poured upon the parched soil of our western plains, brings the shimmer of green fields and the variety of groves and orchards.

In the middle and upper grades of the common school an active, well-developed fancy is one of the chief means of invigorating and intensifying the thought of children. It is one of the deep, living sources from which original energy is imparted to study. To neglect, therefore, the healthful exercise of the fancy in primary grades, where it breaks forth spontaneously, is to dry up those springs from which refreshment comes in later years. It is an admitted fact that much of the journey through the grades is over dry and parched sands. An occasional oasis may appear in sight, but there is a good deal of the monotony of desert barrenness.

Lessons in reading, geography, natural science, and arithmetic are beholden in a score of ways to a fruitful fancy. The teacher in the middle grades who has an active fancy and can awaken like activities in children will make the anvils ring as in a busy workshop, and every blow will count, for the materials are made plastic and the striking arm is invigorated by the fancy.

3. In second and third grade readers the fable holds an important place. Its superior quality as classic can be seen in several points.

In nearly all cases it is a personification of plant or animal life. The talking trees, flowers, and birds touch the child's fancy and draw him into close sympathy with living things in nature. The moral truth involved in a fable is best felt

not in the formulated conclusion, but in the acts of the persons represented. It is better for a child to see the virtues and faults objectified in clear and graphic forms which do not bear at first upon his own conduct. Let a child's judgment be first clear and positive as applied to the conduct of others. There will be abundant later opportunity to throw the clear light of this judgment back upon his own acts. It would be difficult to find a more potent form of moral culture than these convincing judgments with their keen edge incisively applied by the children to their own actions. The teacher in the primary school has many occasions to compare the life of bird or tree, as depicted in fable, with school-room and playground episodes.

As reading exercises the fables are adapted to a very early use in first or second grade. There is no invariable form in which they are worded. The brief sententious fable may be expanded and simplified so as to be adapted to very early reading. The dialogue, which so often appears, is a happy medium through which children learn to represent different objects. This additional exercise of the fancy brings increased interest to the fable and lends greater vim and naturalness to the reading.

While the springs, from which natural interest and expressive reading emerge, are thus kept freely flowing, the retrospect upon these uplands

of school life is always pleasing. The truths so simple and plain to a child, prove deep and lasting. They find their application in a wide field of later human experiences.

4. Robinson Crusoe, as a basis for oral work in second grade and as a reading book in third grade, is a good example of concentration of studies in these two grades. The pedagogical value and fitness of this story for second-grade children (oral narrative) was discussed in the Special Method in History and Literature, Chapter III.

In second grade, the oral presentation and reproduction of the continuous story of Crusoe was found to gather into a focus a variety of studies. The range of employments that Crusoe illustrates gives the children their first clear view into the varied industries and forms of manual labor that surround each child in his home-village or neighborhood. The language lessons are as varied and interesting as can be devised. The study of plants, domestic animals, seasons, and tools, suggested by Crusoe and well adapted for science lessons, is abundant for the uses of second grade. The drawing lessons hinted at by the story of Crusoe and by the natural science topics related to it are the best means of coming closer to the objects and of bringing into action the executive and creative powers of a child.

In the third grade, the story of Crusoe can be read and enjoyed in the printed form. It is hardly

possible, with live teaching, that the narrative will lose interest by repetition. The interest and meaning of the life of the hero acquire a deeper significance. If the realism of the story is provided for by continual study of the representative objects and occupations about the home, it can scarcely grow wearisome. In the third grade our plan of studies includes, as introductory geography, the study of the home by means of excursions. This is a direct continuation of the Crusoe employments begun in second grade. It is altogether probable that the variety of information and interesting incident brought out in the oral treatment of the story in second grade will pave the way for appreciative and expressive reading of the same incidents in third grade.

Instead of overdoing the Crusoe story, as many would be inclined to think, by making it deeply realistic and tangible and relating it in so many ways to other studies and to our own surroundings and concerns, we are strengthening the effect. To make a subject instructive and interesting there is need, not so much of something new and novel at every step, as some deep insight into realities, abundance of detail and experimentation with sensible objects, and a constant relationship of our previous to our incoming stores of knowledge. The Crusoe story has been lauded by writers on education as a rich treasure-house of ideas and of incentive for children. But we shall

not exploit the resources of this or of any other rich reservoir of culture ideas by a hasty or superficial reading of the story. The children may drink deep and long at such fountains if they are really opened up in their fulness. The whole complex of ideas involved in the story must find a deep and fixed setting in the midst of the child's circle of thought and experience. The entanglement of ideas must be close, many-sided, and permanent if the desired effect on character, as determined by the range and connection of ideas, is to be secured.

5. As the fairy or folk-lore tales are expressive of the childhood of the race and lead us back into the thoughts and life of our early European ancestors, so the classic myths lead us into the very presence of the representative men and ideas of the vigorous and youthful nations of Europe. To read these old heroic epics is to taste of the very spirit and conditions of our ancestors in this period of youthful exuberance. He who touches these living stones has his hands upon the primitive strength of European culture. And it is a strength that is by no means exhausted. It has permeated and vivified much of the classic products which later periods of culture have brought to light. The heroic myths of the Greeks, Teutons, and Norsemen are the bearers of poetry, music, art, religion, and patriotism. They contained the germs of later national life and cul-

ture. For a child, therefore, to drink of these fountains, is to acquire a vantage for the appreciation of later ideas and institutions. We are not disposed to emphasize this merit of the old myths. That which is of most value to children in these old classic myths is more immediate and direct. Heroic characters are attractive exponents of heroic qualities. The ideals of early nations are personified in energetic, life-like representatives, and appeal to children from the side of their strongest natural impulses.

The heroic myths are of unquestioned classic merit. They contain much of the finest poetry and imagery of the ages. The father of poetry is the reputed author of the greatest of all the myths, the Iliad and the Odyssey.

The Nibelungen Song has been held by the masters of literature as almost of equal merit with the Greek myths, and the Norse myths are astonishingly rich in fanciful enterprise. All these stories require adaptation to school-room use. They must be chiseled and wrought into forms better adapted to our needs. But these are the quarries from which the materials of youthful culture are to be hewn and fashioned. The quality of the material is of the finest, and it remains for poets and schoolmasters to pour these old songs into the new mould of our Anglo-Saxon speech. Many attempts in this direction have been already made, some by authors of high repute like Hawthorne

and Kingsley, and some by less genial writers. But the labor is a noble one, and will sooner or later bring the heroic boys of the antique world close to the thought and feeling of our boys and girls in these early years.

CHAPTER III

*Literary and Historical Materials in the Four Grades
from Fifth to Eighth Inclusive.*

In the upper half (last four grades) of the common school, all will agree to the extensive use of good literature. It is only a question of choice and arrangement. A good part of the materials suggested for fifth and sixth grades is both historical and classical. The age of myths is not yet fully past, and Hiawatha and the King of the Golden River continue to echo the mythical ideas of the third and fourth grades. The Black Beauty stands apart from the historical line, but it takes a deep, strong hold upon children, and brings out some hearty, wholesome lessons of gentleness and kindness in dealing with horses. Its teachings are no less valuable than those of chivalry and heroism, though in strange contrast to them.

The Lays of Ancient Rome, Higginson's American Explorers, Tales from English History, Heroic Ballads, Magna Charta Stories, Grandfather's Chair, Miles Standish, Sketch Book, Tales of a Grandfather, Stories of Waverly, and the Autobiography of Franklin are historical, and, to a large extent, classic. Some of them are indigenous to America, some to Scotland and to other countries

of Europe. The Lays of Ancient Rome, the Ballads, the Magna Charta stories, and the Tales from English History, belong to the heroic series. Though far separated in time and place, they breathe the same spirit of personal energy, self-sacrifice, and love of country. They reveal manly resistance to cruelty and tyranny. It is well to begin this series with a term's work upon Macaulay's Lays and a few other choice stories in prose and verse. Thereafter we may insert other ballads, where needed, in connection with history, and in amplification of longer stories or masterpieces like Scott's Tales of a Grandfather, and Marmion. In the fifth grade, children are of an age when these stories of heroism in olden days strike a responsive chord. They delight in such tales, memorize them, and enter into the full energy of their spirited reproduction. The main purpose at first is to appreciate their thought as an expression of history, tradition, and national life. A complete and absorbing study of a single series of these warlike ballads, as of Macaulay's, supplies also an excellent standard of comparison for other more or less similar episodes in the history of Switzerland, Greece, England, and America.

In the oral history lessons given on alternate days in fourth grade (see Special Method in History and Literature, p. 53,) we have made a spirited entrance to American history through the

Pioneer Stories of the Mississippi Valley. These should precede and pave the way for classic readings in American history. In the fifth grade, the stories of Columbus and of the chief navigators, also the narratives of the Atlantic-coast pioneers are told. The regular history work of the sixth grade should be a study of the growth of the leading colonies during the colonial period and the French-and-Indian wars.

In the fifth grade we may begin to read some of the hero narratives of our own pioneer epoch as rendered by the best writers; for instance, Higginson's *American Explorers, Pilgrims and Puritans, Stories of Our Country and Grandfather's Chair*. They are life-like and spirited, and introduce us to the realism of our early history in its rugged exposure and trials, while they bring out those stern but high ideals of life which the Puritan and the Cavalier, the navigator, the pioneer hunter and explorer, illustrate. Higginson's collection of letters and reports of the early explorers, with their quaint language and eye-witness descriptions, is strikingly vivid in its portraiture of early scenes upon our shores. Hawthorne, in *Grandfather's Chair*, has moulded the hardy biography of New England leaders into literary form.

Irving's *Sketch Book* and Longfellow's *Miles Standish* give a still more pronounced and pleasing literary cast to two of the characteristic forms of life in our colonial history, the Puritan and the

Dutch Patroon. If the children have reached this point where they can read and enjoy the Sketch Book, it will be worth much as a description of life along the Hudson and will develop taste and appreciation for literary excellence. Even the fanciful and ridiculous elements conduce to mental health and soundness by showing up in pleasing satire the weaknesses and foibles of well-meaning people.

The Autobiography of Franklin has many graphic touches from American life. His intense practical personality, his many-sidedness, and public spirit, make up a character that will long instruct and open out in many directions the minds of the young. His clear sense and wisdom in small affairs as in great, and the pleasing style of his narrative, are sufficiently characteristic to have a strong personal impression. It will hardly be necessary to take the whole of the autobiography, but the more attractive parts, leaving the rest to the private reading of children. Poor Richard's Almanac intensifies the notion of Franklin's practical and every-day wisdom, and at the same time introduces the children to a form of literature that in colonial days, under Franklin's patronage, had a wide acceptance and lasting influence in America.

Snow Bound, Songs of Labor, and Among the Hills, while not historical in the usual sense, are still plainly American and may well be associated with other poetic delineations of American life.

Snow Bound is a picture of New England life, with its pleasing and deep-rooted memories. Its family life and idealization of common objects and joys make it a classic which reaches the hearts of boys and girls. Among the Hills is also a picture of home life in New England mountains, a contrast of the mean and low in home environment to the beauty of thrift and taste and unselfish home joys. The Songs of Labor are descriptive of the toils and spirit of our varied employments in New England and of that larger New England which the migrating Yankees have established between the oceans.

Evangeline is another literary pearl that enshrines in sad and mournful measures a story of colonial days and teaches several great lessons, as of the harshness and injustice of war, of fair-mindedness and sympathy for those of alien speech and country, of patience and gentleness and loyalty to high ideals in a character familiar and sacred to us all.

It appears in the foregoing references that there is much variety of literary portrayal of colonial life and events, of heroic adventure, graphic history, poem, charming satire, proverbial wisdom; of home life and manners as reflected by the genial master in transparent biographical pictures—all these are intensely imbued with the old American spirit.

As we approach the Revolutionary crisis a new body of choice literary products, aglow with the

fire of patriotism and independence, is found stored up for the joy and stimulus of our growing young Americans. Paul Revere's Ride, Grandmother's Story of Bunker Hill, Washington's Letters, A Ballad of the Boston Tea Party, Ode for Washington's Birthday, Lexington (Holmes), The Song of Marion's Men, The Green Mountain Boys, Webster's Speeches at Bunker Hill and on Adams and Jefferson, Old Ticonderoga (Hawthorne), Burke's Speech on the American War, Washington's Farewell to the Army, The Declaration of Independence, Under the Old Elm, and descriptions of some of the great scenes of the war by our best historians.

It is to be desired that children in the seventh grade may have opportunity in regular history lessons to study in detail a few of the central topics of the Revolutionary epoch. This will put them in touch with the spirit and surroundings of the Americans. Let the period of the Revolution be taken for the special study of the seventh grade. With a lesson of twenty or thirty minutes on alternate days, they could read and discuss, during the three terms of this year, three excellent books, Scudder's Life of Washington, Fiske's War of Independence, and Hosmer's Life of Samuel Adams. These books are sufficiently comprehensive, graphic, and interesting to serve as a clear and lively introduction to the history of this epoch and as a basis for the reading of its literature.

In the reading lessons of the same grade we

may well afford to discover and feel what our best patriots and men of letters have said and felt in view of the struggle for freedom. The noblest expressions of sentiment upon great men and their achievements are contagious with the young. Patriotism can find no better soil in which to strike its deepest roots than the noble outbursts of our orators and poets and patriotic statesmen. The cumulative effect of these varied but kindred materials is greater than when scattered and disconnected. They mutually support each other, and when they are brought into close dependence upon parallel historical studies, we may well say that the children are drinking from the deep and pure sources of true Americanism.

That period of our history which falls later than the Revolutionary war opens up a series of great and perplexing problems, so vast, complex, and far-reaching that it is a serious question what to do with them below the high school. The pedagogy of the future must determine what use can be made of this perplexing wealth of materials. The past hundred years has been fruitful in sweeping changes and developments. The building and launching of the constitution, internal improvements, immigration, inventions, the slavery conflict, growth of the public and higher schools, railroads, civil service, the religious orders, labor and capital,—these are too great for a child to grasp, and yet he must be led to a few

look-out points where he can catch a glimpse of these mighty movements. It seems best to study in eighth grade such topics, subsequent to the Revolution, as children can best understand and as will give them a clear view of the chief movements of this century. We suggest three books for reading and discussion in this grade: *Life of John Quincy Adams*, *Life of Daniel Webster*, and *Life of Abraham Lincoln*. (First two of Statesman's series.) See *Special Method in Literature and History*; last chapter, p. 107.

Parallel to whatever history we attempt to teach in the eighth grade should run a selection of the best literary products that our American authors can furnish, and here again we are rich in resources. The thought and life of our people find their high-water mark in the poet's clarion note and the statesman's impassioned appeal. No others have perceived the destiny of our young republic as our cherished poets, Longfellow, Whittier, Bryant, Holmes, and Emerson. They have stood upon the mountain tops, looking far and wide through the clear atmosphere while the great army of the people have been tenting in the valleys below. These wakeful priests and prophets have caught the bright tints of the morning while the people were still asleep, and have witnessed the suffused glory of the sunset clouds when the weary masses below had already forgotten the day's toil. One thing at least, and that

the greatest, can be done for our children before they finish the common school course. They may rise into this pure atmosphere of poet, patriot, sage, and prophet. They may hear these deathless strains and feel the thrill of these clarion notes. Let their ears be once attuned to the strength and harmony of this music and it will not cease to echo in their deeper being. The future patriots will be at hand and the coming years will see them rising to the great duties that inevitably await them. We have a body of noble, patriotic material which is capable of producing this effect if handled by skillful teachers. The Ordinance of 1787, The Federalist, numbers 1 and 2, Washington's Inaugurals and the Farewell Address, Everett's Oration on Washington, O. Mother of a Mighty Race (Bryant); Our Country's Call (Bryant); Abraham Lincoln (Bryant); Lincoln's Inaugurals and Gettysburg Speech, Army Hymn, and The Flower of Liberty (Holmes); Webster's Second Speech on Foot's Resolution, The Emancipation Proclamation, The Fortune of the Republic, etc., (Emerson); Antiquity of Freedom (Bryant); Centennial Hymn (Whittier); The Building of the Ship (Longfellow); The Poor Voter on Election Day (Whittier).

Why not gather together these sources of power, of unselfish patriotism, of self-sacrifice, of noble and inspiring impulse? Let this fruit-bringing seed be sown deep in the minds and hearts of

the receptive young. What has inspired the best of men to high thinking and living can touch them.

It is not by reading and declaiming a few miscellaneous fragments of patriotic gush, not by waving flags and banners and following processions, that the deeper sentiments of patriotism and humanity are to be touched, but by gathering and concentrating these fuller, richer sources of spiritual power and conscious national destiny. The school-room is by far the best place to consolidate these purifying and conserving sentiments. By gathering into a rising series and focusing in the higher grades the various forms, in prose and verse, in which the genius of our country has found its strongest expression; by associating these ringing sentiments with the epochs and crises of our history, with the valorous deeds of patriots upon the field and of statesmen in the senate, with the life and longings of home nurtured poets and sages we shall plant seed whose fruitage will not disappoint the lovers of the Fatherland.

Mr. Horace E. Scudder in his two essays on Literature and American Classics in the common school has portrayed with convincing clearness the spiritual power and high-toned Americanism which breathe from those literary monuments which have been quarried from our own hillsides and chiseled by American hands. We recommend to every teacher the reading in full of these essays from which we quote at much length:

“Fifty years ago there were living in America six men of mark of whom the youngest was then nineteen years of age, the oldest forty-four. Three of the six are in their graves and three still breathe the kindly air. (Since this was written in 1888 the last of the six has passed away.) One only of the six has held high place in the national councils and it is not by that distinction that he is known and loved. They have not been in battle; they have had no armies at their command; they have not amassed great fortunes, nor have great industries waited on their movements. Those pageants of circumstances which kindle the imagination have been remote from their names. They were born on American soil; they have breathed American air; they were nurtured on American ideas. They are Americans of Americans. They are as truly the issue of our national life as are the common schools in which we glory. During the fifty years in which our common-school system has been growing up to maturity these six have lived and sung; and I dare say that the lives and songs of Bryant, Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, and Lowell, have an imperishable value, regarded as exponents of national life, not for a moment to be outweighed in the balance by the most elaborate system of common schools which the wit of man may devise. The nation may command armies and schools to rise from the soil, but it cannot call

into life a poet. Yet when the poet comes and we hear his voice in the upper air, then we know the nation he owns is worthy of the name. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Even so, pure poetry springs from no rank soil of national life.

“I am not arguing for the critical study of our great authors, in the higher grades of our schools. They are not the best subjects for critical scholarship; criticism demands greater remoteness, greater *foreignness* of nature. Moreover, critical study is not the surest method of securing the full measure of spiritual light, though it yields abundant gain in the refinement of the intellectual nature and in the quickening of the perceptive faculties. I am arguing for the free, generous use of these authors in the principal years of school life. It is then that their power is most profoundly needed, and will be most strongly felt. We need to put our children in their impressionable years into instant and close connection with the highest manifestation of our national life. Away with the bottle and the tube. Give them a lusty draft at the mother’s full breast!

“Nor do I fear that such a course will breed a narrow and parochial Americanism. On the contrary, it would destroy a vulgar pride in country, help the young to see humanity from the heights on which the masters of song have dwelt, and open the mind to the more hospitable entertain-

ment of the best literature of every clime and age. I am convinced that there is no surer way to introduce the best English literature into our schools than to give the place of honor to American literature. In the order of nature a youth must be a *citizen* of his own country before he can become naturalized in the world. We recognize this in our geography and history; we may wisely recognize it also in our reading.

“The place, then, of literature in our common-school education is in spiritualizing life, letting light into the mind, inspiring and feeding the higher forces of human nature.

“It is the business of the old to transmit to the young the great traditions of the past of the country; to feed anew the undying flame of patriotism. There is the element of destiny. No nation lives upon its past; it is already dead when it says: ‘Let us eat and drink to-day; to-morrow we die.’ But what that destiny is to be may be read in the ideals which the young are forming; and those ideals, again, it is the business of the old to guide. They cannot form them; the young must form them for themselves; but whether these ideals shall be large or petty, honorable or mean, will depend upon the sustenance on which they are fed.

“Now, in a democracy more signally than under any other form of national organization, it is vitally necessary that there should be an unceas-

ing, unimpeded circulation of the spiritual life of the people. The sacrifice of the men and women who have made and preserved America, from the days of Virginia and New England to this hour, has been ascending from the earth in a never-ending cloud; they have fallen again in strains of music, in sculpture, in painting, in memorial hall, in tale, in oration, in poem, in consecration of life; and the spirit which ascended is the same as that which descended. In literature above all is this spirit *enshrined*. You have but to throw open the *shrine* and the spirit comes with its outspread blessings upon millions of waiting souls. Entering them, it *reissues* in countless shapes, and thus is the life of the nation in *its* highest form kept ever in motion, and without motion is no life.

“The deposit of nationality is in laws, institutions, art, character, and religion; but laws, institutions, character, and religion are expressed through art and mainly through the art of letters. It is literature, therefore, that holds in precipitation the genius of the country, and the higher the form of literature, the more consummate the expression of that spirit which does not so much seek a materialization as it shapes itself inevitably in fitting form. Long may we read and ponder the life of Washington, yet at last fall back content upon those graphic lines of Lowell in *Under the Old Elm*, which cause the figure of the great American to outline itself upon

the imagination with large and strong portraiture. The spirit of the orations of Webster and Benton, the whole history of the young giant poised in conscious strength before his triumphant struggle, one may catch in a breath in those glowing lines which end *The Building of the Ship*. The deep passion of the war for the Union may be overlooked in some formal study of battles and campaigns, but rises pure, strong, and flaming in the immortal *Gettysburg Speech*.

“Precisely thus the sentiment of patriotism must be kept fresh and living in the hearts of the young through quick and immediate contact with the sources of that sentiment; and the most helpful means are those spiritual deposits of patriotism which we find in noble poetry and lofty prose, as communicated by men who have lived patriotic lives and been fed with coals from the altar.

“It is from the men and women bred on American soil that the fittest words come for the spiritual enrichment of American youth. I believe heartily in the advantage of enlarging one’s horizon by taking in other climes and other ages, but first let us make sure of that great expansive power which lies close at hand. I am sure there never was a time or country where national education, under the guidance of national art and thought, was so possible as in America to-day.

“The body of wholesome, strong American literature is large enough to make it possible to keep

boys and girls upon it from the time when they begin to recognize the element of authorship until they leave the school, and it is varied and flexible enough to give employment to the mind in all its stages of development. Moreover, this literature is interesting, and is allied with interesting concerns; half the hard places are overcome by the willing mind, and the boy who stumbles over some jejune lesson in his reading book will run over a bit of genuine prose from Irving which the school book maker, with his calipers pronounces too hard.

“We have gone quite far enough in the mechanical development of the common school system. What we most need is the breath of life, and reading offers the noblest means for receiving and imparting this breath of life. The spiritual element in education in our common schools will be found to lie in reserve in literature, and, as I believe, most effectively in American literature.

“Think for a moment of that great, silent, resistless power for good which might at this moment be lifting the youth of the country, were the hours for reading in school expended upon the undying, life-giving books! Think of the substantial growth of a generous Americanism, were the boys and girls to be fed from the fresh springs of American literature. It would be no narrow provincialism into which they would emerge. The windows in Longfellow’s mind looked to the east, and the

children who have entered into possession of his wealth travel far. Bryant's flight carries one through upper air, over broad champaigns. The lover of Emerson has learned to get a remote vision. The companion of Thoreau finds Concord become suddenly the center of a very wide horizon. Irving has annexed Spain to America. Hawthorne has nationalized the gods of Greece and given an atmosphere to New England. Whittier has translated the Hebrew Scriptures into the American dialect. Lowell gives the American boy an academy without cutting down a stick of timber in the grove, or disturbing the birds. Holmes supplies that hickory which makes one careless of the crackling of thorns. Franklin makes the America of a past generation a part of the great world before treaties had bound the floating states into formal connection with venerable nations. What is all this but saying that the rich inheritance we have is no local ten-acre lot, but a part of the undivided estate of humanity. Universality, Cosmopolitanism—these are fine words, but no man ever secured the freedom of the Universe who did not first pay taxes and vote in his own village." "Literature in School," Houghton and Mifflin.

The series of American classics is nowise confined to the ideas of local or national patriotism, but above and beyond that deep and powerful sentiment which magnifies the opportunity and

manifest destiny of our nation, it grasps at the ideal form and content of those Christian virtues which now and evermore carry healing and comfort to the toiling millions. Our poets, as they have pondered on the past and looked into the future, were not able to be content with less than the best. As the vision of the coming years unrolled itself before them they looked upon it with joy mingled with solicitude. In the mighty conflicts now upon us only those of generous and saintly purpose and of pure hearts can prevail.

"Brief is the time, I know,
The warfare scarce begun;
Yet all may win the triumphs thou hast won.
Still flows the fount whose waters strengthened thee,
The victors' names are yet too few to fill
Heaven's mighty roll; the glorious armory
That ministered to thee is open still."

—*Bryant.*

To reveal this Christian armory, the defenses of the soul against the assaults of evil, has been the highest inspiration of our poets. What depth and beauty and impersonation of Christlike virtues do we find in *Snow Bound*, *Among the Hills*, *Evangeline*, *The Psalm of Life*, *The Village Blacksmith*, *The Conqueror's Grave*, *To a Waterfowl*, *The Groves were God's First Temples*, *The Living Temple*, *The Sun Day Hymn*, *The Chambered Nautilus*, *Vision of Sir Launfal*, *The Great Stone Face*.

The Bible is no longer generally admissible as a school text-book, but the spirit of Christianity, clad in the forms of strength and grace, is immanent in the works of our poets. So universal, so human, so fit to the needs and destinies of men, are the truths of the great evangel that the prophets and seers of our race drift evermore into the sheltering haven they supply. To drink in these potent truths through poetry and song, to see them enshrined in the imagery and fervor of the sacred masterpieces of our literature, is more than culture, more than morality; it is the portal and sanctuary of religious thought; and children may enter here.

But our writers and literary leaders were not simply Americans. They were also Europeans. The Puritan brought his religion with him, the Cavalier acquired his gentlemanly instincts in the old home, not in the untrodden forests of the New World. Much of what we call American is the wine of the Old World poured into the bearskins and buckskins of the west, with a flavor of the freedom of our western wilds. Though born and bred on American soil and to the last exemplars of the American spirit, our literary leaders have derived their ideas and inspiration from the literature, tradition, and history of the Old World. It will be no small part of our purpose, therefore, to open up to the children of our common schools the best entrance to the history and literature of

Europe. Our own writers and poets have done this for us in a variety of instances. Hawthorne's rendering of the Greek Myths, Bryant's Translation of the Iliad and Odyssey, a good half of Irving's Sketch Book, Lowell's Vision of Sir Launfal, Aladdin, and Prometheus; Irving's Alhambra, Longfellow's Golden Legend, Sandolphin; Taylor's Boys of Other Countries. Nearly the whole of our literature, even when dealing ostensibly with American topics, is suffused with the spirit and imagery of the Old World traditions. For example, Hiawatha, Evangeline, and Little People of the Snow. There is also a large collection of prose versions of European traditions and stories, which, while not classic, are still lively renderings of classic stories and well suited to the collateral reading of children. Such are Gods and Heroes, Tales from English History, Tales from Spencer, Heroes of Asgard, Story of the Iliad and Odyssey.

The transition from our own poets, who have handled European themes, to English writers who have done the same, is easy and natural; Macaulay's Lays of Ancient Rome, Scott's Tales of a Grandfather, The Stories of Waverley, the Christmas Carol, Kingsley's Greek Heroes and Water Babies, Ruskin's King of the Golden River, Lady of the Lake, Marmion, Roger de Coverley Papers, Merchant of Venice, Arabian Nights, Peasant and Prince, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, Gulliver's

Travels, and others have become by inheritance and birthright as much a part of the American child's culture as the more distinctive products of our own writers. No line can be drawn between those writings which are American and those which sprung from the soil of England and Europe. So intimate and vital is the connection between our present and our past, between our children and their cousins across the water.

These American and European literary products lie side by side in the school course, though the predominating spirit through the middle and higher grades up to the eighth should be American. We have noticed that in the earlier grades most of our classic reading matter comes from Europe, the nursery rhymes, the folk-lore, fables, and myths; because the childhood of our culture periods was in Europe. But into the fourth grade, and from there on, beginning with the pioneers on sea and land, our American history and literature enter as a powerful agent of culture. It brings us into quick and vital contact not simply with the outward facts but with the inmost spirit of our national life and struggle toward development. This gives the American impulse free and full expansion and fortunate are we, beyond expression, that pure and lofty poets stand at the threshold to usher the children into this realm founded deep in the realism of our past history, and rising grandly into the idealism of our pure

desires and hopes. As we advance into the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades the literature of Europe begins again to increase in quantity and influence and to share equally with American authors the attention of the children.

The Americanism of our poets and prose writers has also another side to it which is one sign of the breadth and many-sidedness of literature as a study for the young. North America is a land rich in variety of natural scenery and resource. Nature has decked the new world with a lavish hand, forest and mountain, lake and river, prairie and desert, the summer land of flowers, and the home of New England winters. The masterpieces of our poets are full of the scenery, vegetation, sunsets, mountains, and prairies of the western empire. The flowers, the birds, the wild beasts, the pathless forests, the limitless stretches of plain, have mirrored themselves in the songs of our poets and have rendered them dearer to us because seen and realized in this idealism. Unconsciously perhaps the feeling of patriotism is largely based upon this knowledge of the rich and varied beauty and bounty of our native land.

" I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills,
My heart with rapture thrills,
Like that above."

As along the shores of our northern lakes the clear and quiet waters reflect the green banks, the

rolling forest-crowned hills, the rocky bluffs, the floating clouds and over-arching sky of blue, so in the homespun, classic verse and prose of our own writers are imaged the myriad charms of our native land. Bryant especially is the poet of forest and glade. The Forest Hymn, The Death of the Flowers, The Return of the Birds, A Summer Ramble, The Fringed Gentian, The Hunter of the Prairies, The White-footed Deer, To a Waterfowl, Thanatopsis, and many others. Longfellow's Hiawatha, Evangeline; Whittier's Barefoot Boy, Songs of Labor, Among the Hills, and Snow Bound; Hawthorne's Tales of the White Hills, Holmes' Spring, Lowell's Indian Summer Reverie, The Oak, and many more.

Verging more toward pure science, and still aglow with the poet's love of nature, are Burroughs' Wake Robin, Birds and Bees, Sharp Eyes, etc.; Thoreau's Succession of Forest Trees and Wild Apples; Warner's Hunting of the Deer, etc., and many other choice products of our own literature. The love of nature in all her forms can not be better instilled than by following these poets in their rambles. Nature study, as demanded by the lovers of pure science, must become an integral and vital part of our school course. While the study of literature as it images nature, can not take the place of pure science, it is the most powerful ally that the scientists can call in. The poets can do as much to idealize science study, to

wake the dull eye, and quicken the languid interest in nature, as scientists themselves. Away with this presumed antagonism between literature and science! Neither is complete without the other. Neither can stand on its own feet. But together, in mutual support, they can not be tripped up. The facts, the laws, the utilities, adaptations, and wonders in nature are not so marvelous but the poet's eye will pierce beneath and above them, will give them a deeper interpretation and clothe them in a garment of beauty and praise. There is nothing beautiful or grand or *praiseworthy* that the poet's eye will not detect it, and the poet's art *reveal* it in living and lasting forms. Let the scientist delve and the poet sing. The messages between them should be only those of cheer.

The literature selected for these grades has a wide scope. It is instinct with the best Americanism. It draws from Europe at every breath, while enjoying the freedom of the west. Social, political, and home life and virtue are portrayed in great variety of dress. Nature also and natural science reveal the myriad forms of beauty and utility.

CHAPTER IV.

The Value of Classics to the Teacher.

In discussing the value and fruitfulness of this field of study to children it is impossible to forbear the suggestion of its scope and significance for teachers. If the masters of song and expression are able to work so strongly upon the immature minds of children, how much deeper the influence upon the mature and thoughtful minds of teachable teachers! They above all others should have dispositions receptive of the best educational influences. The duties and experiences of their daily work predispose them toward an earnest and teachable spirit. In very many cases, therefore, their minds are wide open to the reception of the best. And how deep and wide and many-sided is this enfranchisement of the soul through literature!

It is a gateway to history; not, however, that castaway shell which our text-books, in the form of a dull recital of facts, call history; but its heart and soul, the living, breathing men and women, the source and incentive of great movements and struggles toward the light. Literature does not make the study of history superfluous, but it puts a purpose into history which lies deeper than the

facts, it sifts out the wheat from the chaff, casts aside the superficial and accidental, and gets down into the deep current of events where living causes are at work.

The Courtship of Miles Standish, for example, is deeper and stronger than history because it idealizes the stern and rigid qualities of the Puritan, while John Alden and Priscilla touch a deeper universal sympathy, and body forth in forms of beauty that pulsing human love which antedates the Puritan and underlies all forms of religion and society.

Illustrative cases have been given in sufficient abundance to show that literature, among other things, has a strong political side. It grasps with a master hand those questions which involve true patriotism. It exalts them into ideals, and fires the hearts of the people to devotion and sacrifice for their fulfillment.

Burke's Oration on the American War is to one who has studied American history an astonishing confirmation of how righteous and far-sighted were the principles for which Samuel Adams and the other patriots struggled at the opening of the Revolution. Webster's speech at Bunker Hill is a graphic and fervent retrospect on the past of a great struggle and a prophetic view of the swelling tide of individual, social, and national well-being.

If the teacher is to interpret history to school

children, he must learn to grasp what is essential and vital, he must be able to discriminate between those events which are trivial and those of lasting concern. The study of our best American literature will reveal to him this distinction and make him a keen and comprehensive critic of political affairs.

Literature is also a mirror that reflects many sides of social life and usage. There is no part of a teacher's education that is so vital to his practical success as social culture. John Locke's *Thoughts on Education* are, in the main, an inquiry into the methods and means by which an English gentleman can be formed. The aim of the tutor who has this difficult task, is not chiefly to give learning, to fill the mind with information, to develop mentality, but to train the practical judgment in harmony with gentlemanly conduct. The tutor, himself a scholar, is to know the world, its ins and outs, its varieties of social distinction and usage, its snares and pitfalls, its wise men and fools. The child is to learn to look the world in the face and understand it, to know himself and to be master of himself and of his conduct, to appreciate other people in their moods and characters, and to adapt himself prudently and with tact to the practical needs. The gentleman whom Locke sets up as his ideal is not a fashion-plate figure, not a drawing-room gallant, but a clear-headed man who understands other people and

himself, and has been led by insensible degrees to so shape his habitual conduct as most wisely to answer his needs in the real world. Emerson, with all his lofty idealism and unconventionalism, has an ideal of education nearly akin to that of Locke. This social ideal of Locke and Emerson is one that American teachers can well afford to ponder. As a nation we have been accustomed to think that a certain amount of roughness and boorishness was necessary as a veil to cover the strongest manly qualities. Smoothness and tact and polish, however successful they may be in real life, are, theoretically at least, at a discount. The Adamses, Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Thoreau, were men who did violence in a good many ways to social usages, and we may admire them too much for it.

To the teacher who stands in the presence of thirty to fifty distinct species of incipient men and women, social insight and culture, the ability to appreciate each in his individual traits, his strength or weakness, is a prime essential to good educative work.

Now, there are two avenues through which social culture is attainable,—contact with men and women in the social environment which envelops us all, and literature. Literature is first of all a hundred-sided revelation of human conduct as springing from motive. Irving, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Holmes, and Lowell are revealers of hu-

manity. Still more so are Dickens, and Eliot, and Shakespeare, and Goethe. To study these authors is not simply to enjoy the graphic power of an artist, but to look into the lives of so many varieties of men and women. They lay bare the heart and its inward promptings. Our appreciation for many forms of life under widely differing conditions is awakened. We come in touch with those typical varieties of men and woman whom we shall daily meet if we will but notice. It broadens one's perceptions and sympathies, it reveals the many-sidedness of human life. It suggests to a teacher that the forty varieties of humanity in her schoolroom are not after one pattern, nor to be manipulated according to a single device.

Literature is also a sharp and caustic critic of our own follies or foibles, to one who can reflect. It has a multitude of surprises by which we are able, as Burns wished,

"To see oursel's as ithers see us."

Practical social life and literature are not distinct modes of culture. They are one, they interact upon each other in scores of ways. Give a teacher social opportunities, give him the best of our classic literature, let these two work their full influence upon him,—then if he cannot become a teacher, it is a hopeless case. Let him go to the shop, to the farm, or to the legislature; there is no place for him in the schoolroom.

It is in literature, also, and in those lives and scenes from history which literary artists have worked up that the teacher can best develop his own moral ideals and strengthen the groundwork of his own moral character. The stream will not rise above its source, and a teacher's moral influence in a school will not reach above the inspirations from high sources which he himself has felt. Those teachers who have devoted themselves solely to the mastery of the texts they teach, who have read little from our best writers, are drawing upon a slender capital of moral resource. Not even if home influences have laid a sound basis of moral habits are these sufficient reserves for the exigencies of teaching. The moral nature of the teacher needs constant stimulus to upward growing, and the children need examples, ideal illustrations, life and blood impersonations of the virtues, and literature is the chief and only safe reservoir from which to draw them.

Besides the historical, social, and moral tuition for teachers in literature, there are several other important culture effects in it. The deepest religious incentives are touched, nature in her myriad phases is observed with the eye of the poet and scientist, and the esthetic side of poetry and rhythmic prose, its charm and graces of style, its music and eloquence, work their influence upon the reader. Literature is a harp of many strings, and happy is that teacher who has learned to de-

tect its tones and overtones, who has listened with pleasure to its varied raptures, and has felt that expansion of soul which it produces.

Literature, in the sense in which we have been using it, has been called the literature of power, the literature of the spirit. That is, it has generative, spiritual life. It is not simple knowledge, it is knowledge energized, charged with potency. It is knowledge into which the poet has breathed the breath of life. The difference between bare knowledge and the literature of power is like the difference between a perfect statue in stone and a living, pulsing, human form.

One of the virtues of literature, therefore, is the mental stimulus, the joy, the awakening, the intensity of thought it spontaneously calls forth. Text-books are usually a bore, but literature is a natural resource even in hours of weariness. Who would dream of enlivening leisure hours or vacation rest with text-books of grammar, or arithmetic, or history, or science? But the poet soothes with music, solemn or gay, according to our choice. If we go to the woods or lakes to escape our friends, we take one of the masters of song with us. After a day of toil and weariness, we can turn to *Evangeline*, or *Lady of the Lake*, or *Vision of Sir Launfal*, and soon we are listening to

“The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,”

or the echo of the hunter's horn.

"The deep-mouthed blood-hound's heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way,
And faint, from farther distance borne
Were heard the clanging hoof and horn."

At a time when we are not fit for the irksome and perfunctory preparation of text-book lessons, we are still capable of receiving abundant entertainment or hearty inspiration from Warner's *How I Killed a Bear*, or Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*, or *Sleepy Hollow*. Literature is recreation in its double sense. It gives rest and relief, and it builds up.

Teachers should shake themselves free from the conviction that severe disciplinary studies are the best part of education. They have their well-merited place. But there are higher spiritual fountains from which to draw. Read the lives of Scott, Macaulay, Irving, and Hawthorne, and Emerson, and discover that the things we do with the greatest inward spontaneity and pleasure and ease are often the best.

Literature, both in prose and verse, is what the teacher needs, because our best authors are our best teachers in their method of handling their subjects. They know how to find access to the reader's mind by making their ideas attractive, interesting, and beautiful. They seem to know how to sharpen the edge of truth, to render it more keen and incisive. They drive truth deeper so that it remains imbedded in the life and

thought. Let a poet clothe an idea with strength and wing it with fancy and it will find its way straight to the heart. First of all, nearly all our classic writers, especially those we use in the grades, handle their subjects from the concrete, graphic, picturesque side. They not only illustrate abundantly from nature and real things in life; they nearly always individualize and personify their ideas. Virtue to a poet is nothing unless it is impersonated. A true poet is never abstract or dry or formal in his treatment of a subject. It is natural for a literary artist, whether in verse or prose, to create pictures, to put all his ideas into life forms and bring them close to the real ones in nature. Homer's idea of wisdom is Minerva, war is Mars, strength is Ajax, skill and prudence are Ulysses, fidelity is Penelope. Dickens does not talk about schoolmasters in general, but of Squeers. Shakespeare's idea of jealousy is not a definition, not a formula, but Othello. Those books which have enthralled the world, like Robinson Crusoe, Pilgrim's Progress, Gulliver's Travels, Arabian Nights, Evangeline, Ivanhoe, Merchant of Venice,—they deal with no form of classified or generalized knowledge; they give us no definitions, they are scenes from real life. They stand among realities, and their roots are down in the soil of things. They are persons hemmed in by the close environment of facts.

This realism, this objectifying of thought, this

living form of knowledge is characteristic of all great writers in prose or verse. The novelist, the romancer, the poet, the orator, and even the essayist will always put the breath of reality into his work by an infusion of concreteness, of graphic personification. The poet's fancy, building out of the abundant materials of sense experience, is what gives color and warmth to all his thoughts. Strong writers make incessant use of figures of speech. Their thought must clothe itself with the whole panoply of imagery and graphic representation in order to be efficient in the warfare for truth.

What a lesson for the teacher! What models upon which to develop his style of thinking! If the teaching profession and its work could be weighed in the balance, the scale would fall on the side of the abstract with a heavy thud. Not that *object-lessons* will save us. They only parody the truth. For the object-lesson as a separate thing we have no use at all. But to ground every idea and every study in realism, to pass up steadily through real objects and experience to a perception of truths which have wide application, to science—this is the true philosophy of teaching.

The classic writers lead us even one grand step beyond realism. The fancy builds better than the cold reason. It adorns and ennobles thought till it becomes full-fledged for the flight toward the ideal.

As the poet, standing by the sea-shore, ponders the life that has been in the now empty shell washed up from the deep, his fancy discovers in the shell a resemblance to human life and destiny, and he cries:

“Build thee more stately mansions, O, my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

Is it possible that one could fall under the sway of the poets and prose artists, appropriate their images and fruitful style of thought, be wrought upon by their fancies, and still remain dull and lifeless and prosaic in the classroom? No wonder that true literature has been called the literature of power, as distinguished from the literature of knowledge (supplementary readers, pure science, information books, etc.) The lives and works of our best writers contain an expansive spiritual energy, which, working into the mind of a teacher, breaks the shell of mechanism and formality. The artist gives bright tints and colors to ideas which would otherwise be faded and bleached.

The study of the best classic literature adapted to children in each age is a fruitful form of psychology and child study. The series of books selected for the different grades is supposed to

be adapted to the children at each period. The books which suit the temper and taste of children in primary grades are peculiar in quality and fit those pupils better than older ones. In intermediate classes the boyhood spirit, which delights in myth, physical deeds of prowess, etc., shows itself, and many of the stories, ballads, and longer poems breathe this spirit. In grammar grades the expanding, maturing minds of children leap forward to the appreciation of more complex and extended forms of literature which deal with some of the great problems of life more seriously, as *Snow Bound*, *Evangeline*, *Roger de Coverly*, *Merchant of Venice*, etc.

Any classic product which is suited to pupils of the common school, may generally be used in several grades. Hawthorne's *Wonder Book*, for instance, may be used anywhere from the third to the eighth grade by a skillful teacher. But for us the important question is, to what grade of children is it best adapted? Where does its style of thought best fit the temper of the children? Children in the eighth grade may read it and get pleasure and good from it, but it does not come up to the full measure of their needs. Children of the third grade cannot master it with sufficient ease, but in the latter part of the fourth or first part of the fifth grade it seems to exactly suit the wants, that is, the spiritual wants of the children. It will vary, of course, in different schools and

classes. Now, it is a problem for our serious consideration to determine what classics to use and just where each classic belongs, within reasonable limits. Let us inquire where the best culture effect can be realized from each book used, where it is calculated to work its best and strongest influence. To accomplish this result it is necessary to study equally the temper of the children and the quality of the books, to seek the proper food for the growing mind at its different stages. This is not chiefly a matter of simplicity or complexity of language. Our readers are largely graded by the difficulty of language. But literature should be distributed through the school grades according to its power to arouse thought and interest. Language will have to be regarded, but as secondary. Look first to the thought-material which is to engage children's minds, and then force the language into subservience to that end. The final test to determine the place of a classic in the school course must be the experiment of the class-room. We may exercise our best judgment beforehand, and later find that a classic belongs one or two grades higher or lower than we thought.

We really need some comprehensive principle upon which to make the selection of classics as adapted to the nature (psychology) of children. The theory of the *culture epochs* of race history as parallel to child-development offers at least a suggestion. A few of the great periods of history

seem to correspond fairly well to certain epochs of child growth. The age of folk-lore and the fairy tale is often called the childhood of the race; the predominance of the imagination and of the childlike interpretation of things in nature reminds us strikingly of the fancies of children. We find also that the literary remains of this epoch in the world's history, the fairy tales, are the peculiar delight of children from four to six. In like manner the heroic age and its literary products seem to fascinate the children of nine to eleven years. In connection with this theory it is observed that the greatest poets of the world in different countries are those who have given poetic form and expression to the typical ideas and characters of some epoch of history. So Homer, Virgil, Dante, Milton, Scott. The best literature is much of it the precipitate of the thought and life of historical epochs in race development. Experiment has shown that much of this literature is peculiarly adapted to exert strong culture influence upon children. The literary heritage of the chief culture epochs is destined therefore to enter as a powerful agent in the education of children in our schools, and the place of a piece of literature in history suggests at least its place in child culture.

The study of these literary masterpieces, the choicest of the world, while it offers a broad perspective of history, also enters deep into the psy-

chology of children and their periods of growth and change. What a study for the teacher!

Suppose now that a wise selection of the best classics for school use had been made. The books for each grade would respond not only to the ability but to the characteristic temper and mental status of children at that age. The books would arouse the full compass of the children's mental power, their emotional as well as intellectual capacities, their sympathy, interest, and feeling. The teacher who is about to undertake the training of these children may not know much about children of that age. How can she best put herself into an attitude by which she can meet and understand the children on their own ground? Not simply their intellectual ability and standing, but, better still, their impulses and sympathies, their motives and hearts. Most people as they reach maturity and advance in years have a tendency to grow away from their childhood. Their purposes have changed from those of childhood to those of mature life. They are no longer interested in the things that interest children. They seem trivial and even incomprehensible.

Now the person who is preparing to be a teacher should grow back into his childhood. Without losing the dignity or purpose of mature life, he should allow the memories and sympathies of childhood to revive. The insight which comes from companionship and sympathy with children

he needs in order to guide them with tact and wisdom.

The literature which belongs to any age of childhood is perhaps the best key to the spirit and disposition of that period. The fact that it is classic makes it a fit instrument with which the teacher may re-awaken the dormant experiences and memories of that period in his own life. The teacher who finds it impossible to re-awaken his interest in the literature that goes home to the hearts of children has *prima facie* evidence that he is not qualified to stimulate and guide their mental movements. The human element in letters is the source of its deep and lasting power; the human element in children is the center of their educative life and he who disregards this and thinks only of intellectual exercises is a poor machine. The literature which children appreciate and love is the key to their soul life. It has power to stimulate teacher and pupil alike and is therefore a common ground where they may both stand and look into each other's faces with sympathy.

This is not so much the statement of a theory as a direct inference from many observations. It has been observed repeatedly in different schools under many teachers, that *The Lady of the Lake*, *Vision of Sir Launfal*, *Sleepy Hollow*, or *Merchant of Venice*, have had an astonishing power to bring teacher and children into near and cherished companionship. It is not possible to express the pro-

found lessons of life that children get from the poets. In the prelude to Whittier's *Among the Hills*, what a picture is drawn of the coarse, hard lot of parents and children in an ungarnished home, "so pinched and bare and comfortless," while the poem itself, a view of that home among the hills which thrift and taste and love have made,

"Invites the eye to see and heart to feel
The beauty and the joy within their reach;
Home and home loves and the beatitudes
Of nature free to all."

To study such poetry in its effect upon children is a monopoly of the rich educational opportunity which falls naturally into the hands of teachers. Psychology, as derived from text-books, is apt to be cold and formal; that which springs from the contact of young minds with the fountains of song lives and breathes. If a teacher desires to fit herself for primary instruction she can do nothing so well calculated to bring herself *en rapport* with little children as to read the nursery rhymes, the fairy tales, fables, and early myths. They bring her along a charming road into the realm of child-like fancies and sympathies which were almost faded from her memory. The same door is opened through well selected literature to the hearts of children in intermediate and grammar grades.

A brief retrospect will show the profitableness of classics to the teacher. They show a deep per-

spective into the spirit and inner workings of history. The social life and insight developed by the study of literature give tact and judgment to understand and respect the many-sided individualities found in every school. The teacher's own moral and esthetic and religious ideals are constantly lifted and strengthened by the study of classics. Such reading is a recreation and relief even in hours of weariness and solitude. It is an expansive spiritual power rather than a burden. Literary artists are also a standing illustration of the graphic, spirited manner of handling subjects. Finally, this rich and varied realm of classic thought and expression is the doorway by which we enter again into the moods and impulses and fancies of childhood. We thus revive our own youth and fit ourselves for a quick and appreciative perception of children's needs. It is the best kind of child-study.

CHAPTER V.

Method in Primary Grades.

The first requisite to good reading is something worth reading, something valuable and interesting to the children, and adapted to their minds. We must take it for granted in this discussion that the best literature and the best stories have been selected, and what the teacher has to do is, first, to appreciate these masterpieces for herself, and second, to bring the children in the reading lessons to appreciate and enjoy them. In the primary grades we are not so richly supplied with choice materials from good literature as in intermediate and grammar grades. For several years, however, primary teachers have been selecting and adapting the best stories, and some of the leading publishers have brought out in choice school-book form, books which are well adapted to the reading of primary grades.

We should like to assume one other advantage. If children have been treated orally to Robinson Crusoe in the second grade, they will appreciate and read the story much better in the third grade. If some of Grimm's stories are told in first grade, they can be read with ease in the second grade. The teacher's oral presentation of the stories is

the right way to bring them close to the life and interest of children. In the first grade it is the only way, because the children can not yet read. But even if they could read, the oral treatment is much better. The oral presentation is more lively, natural, and realistic. The teacher can adapt the story and the language to the immediate needs of the class as no author can. She can question, or suggest lines of thought, or call up ideas from the children's experience. The oral manner is the true way to let the children delve into the rich culture-content of stories and to awaken a taste for their beauty and truth. We could well wish that before children read mythical stories in fourth grade, they had been stirred up to enjoy them by oral narration and discussion in the preceding year. In the same way, if the reading bears on interesting science topics previously studied, it will be a distinct advantage to the reading lesson. Children like to read about things that have previously excited their interest, whether in story or science. The difficulties of formal reading will also be partly overcome by familiarity with the harder names and words. Our conclusion is that reading lessons, alone, can not provide all the conditions favorable to good reading. Some of these can be well supplied by other studies or by preliminary lessons which pave the way for the reading proper.

**FOLK-LORE STORIES AS READING EXERCISES FOR
FIRST GRADE.**

Let it be supposed that a class of first-grade children has learned to tell a certain story orally. It has interested them and stirred up their thought.

Let them next learn *to read* the same story in a very simple form. This will lead to a series of elementary *reading* lessons in connection with the story, and the aim should be strictly that of mastering the first difficulties of reading. The teacher recalls the story, and asks for a statement from its beginning. If the sentence furnished by the child is simple and suitable, the teacher writes it on the blackboard in plain large script, and it is then made the basis of an analytic study. Each child reads it through and points out the words. Let there be a lively drill upon the sentence till the picture of each word becomes clear and distinct. During the first lesson, two or three short sentences can be handled with success. As new words are learned, they should be mixed up on the board with those learned before, and a quick and varied drill on the words in sentences or in columns be employed to establish the forms in memory. Speed, variety in device, and watchfulness to keep all busy and attentive, are necessary to secure good results.

One or two of the simpler words in a lesson may be taken for phonetic analysis. The simple

sounds are practiced upon and associated with the letters that represent them. These familiar letters are later met and identified in new words; and, as soon as a number of sounds with their symbols has been learned, new words can be constructed and pronounced from these known elements.

In the same way, they recognize old words in sentences and new or changed combinations of old forms, and begin to read new sentences which combine old words in new relations.

In short, the sentence, word, and phonic methods are all used in fitting alternation, while originality and variety of device are necessary in the best exercise of teaching power.

The processes of learning to read by such board-script work are partly analytic and partly synthetic. Children begin with sentences, analyze them into words, and some of the words into their simple sounds. But when these sounds begin to grow familiar, they are identified again in other words, thus combining them into new forms. In the same way, words once learned by the analytic study of sentences are recognized again in new sentences, and thus interpreted in new relations.

The short sentences, derived from a familiar story, when ranged together supply a brief, simple outline of the story. If now this series of sentences be written on the board or printed on slips

of paper, the whole story may be reviewed by the class from day to day till the word and sentence-forms are well mastered. For making these printed slips, some teachers use a small printing press or a type-writer. Eventually several stories may be collected and sewed together, so as to form a little reading book which is the result of the constructive work of teacher and pupils.

The reading lessons, just described, are entirely separate from the oral treatment and reproduction of the stories; yet the thought and interest awakened in the oral work are helpful in keeping up a lively effort in the reading class. The thought material in a good story is itself a mental stimulus, and produces a wakefulness which is favorable to imprinting the forms as well as the content of thought. Expression, also, that is, natural and vivid rendering of the thought, is always aimed at in reading, and springs spontaneously from interesting thought-studies.

Many teachers use the materials furnished by oral lessons in natural science as a similar introduction to reading in first grade. The science lessons furnish good thought-matter for simple sentences, and there is no good reason why, in learning to read, children should not use sentences drawn both from literature and from natural science.

READING IN THE SECOND GRADE.

The oral lessons in good stories, and the later board use of these materials in learning the elements of formal reading, are an excellent preparation for the fuller and more extended reading of similar matter in the second and third grades.

When the oral work of the first grade has thus kindled the fancy of a child upon these charming pictures, and the later board-work has acquainted him with letter and word symbols which express such thought, the reading of the same and other stories of like character (a year later) will follow as an easy and natural sequence. As a preliminary to all good reading exercises, there should be rich and fruitful thought adapted to the age of children. The realm of classic folk-lore contains abundant thought-material peculiar in its fitness to awaken the interest and fancy of children in the first two grades. To bring these choice stories close to the hearts of children should be the aim of much of the work in both these grades. Such an aim, skillfully carried out, not only conduces to the joy of children in first grade, but infuses the reading lessons of second grade with thought and culture of the best quality.

Interest and vigor of thought are certain to help right expression and reading. Reading, like every other study, should be based upon realities. When there is real thought and feeling in the children, a correct expression of them is more

easily secured than by formal demands or by intimidation.

The stories to be read in second or third grade may be fuller and longer than the brief outline sentences used for board-work in the first grade. Besides, these tales, being classic and of permanent value, do not lose their charm by repetition.

METHOD.

By oral reading, we mean the giving of the thought obtained from a printed page to others through the medium of the voice.

oral reading There is first the training of the *eye* in taking in a number of words at a glance—a mechanical process; then the interpretation of these groups of words—a mental process; next the making known of the ideas thus obtained, to others, by means of the voice—also a mechanical process.

The children need special help in each step. We are apt to overdo one at the expense of the others.

1. Eye-training is the foundation of all good reading. Various devices are resorted to in obtaining it. We will suggest a few, not new at all, but useful.

(a) A strip of cardboard on which is a clause or sentence is held before the class, for a moment only, and then removed. The children are asked to give it *verbatim*. The length of the task is increased as the eye becomes trained to this kind of work.

(b) The children open their books at a signal from the teacher, glance through a line, or part of one—indicated by the teacher, close book at once and give the line.

(c) The teacher places on the board clauses or sentences bearing on the lesson, and covers with a map. The map is rolled up to show one of these, which is almost immediately erased. The children are then asked to give it. The map is then rolled up higher, exposing another, which also is speedily erased—and so on until all have been given to the children and erased.

2. The child needs not only to be able to recognize groups of words, but he must be able to get thought from them. The following are some devices to that end:

(a) Suggestive pictures can be made use of to advantage, all through the primary grades. If the child reads part of the story in the picture, and finds it interesting, he will want to read from the printed page, the part not given in the picture.

(b) Where there is no picture—or even where there is one—an *aim* may be useful to arouse interest in the thought, *i. e.*, a thoughtful question may be put by the teacher, which the children can answer only by reading the story; *e. g.*, in the supplementary reader, “Easy Steps for Little Feet,” is found the story of “The Pin and Needle.” There is no picture. The teacher says as

the class are seated, "Now we have a story about a big quarrel between a pin and a needle over the question, 'Which one is the better fellow?' Of what could the needle boast? Of what the pin? Let us see which won."

(c) Let all the pupils look through one or more paragraphs, reading silently, to get the thought, before any *one* is called upon to read aloud. If a child comes to a word that he does not know, during the silent reading, the teacher helps him to get it—from the context if possible—if not, by the sounds of the letters which compose it.

As each child finishes the task assigned, he raises his eyes from the book, showing by this act that he is ready to tell what he has just read. The thought may be given by the child in his own language to assure the teacher that he has it. Usually, however, in the lower grades, this is unnecessary, the language of the book being nearly as simple as his own.

The advantage of having *all* the pupils kept busy instead of one alone who might be called upon to read the paragraph, is evident. *Every child reads silently all* of the lesson. Time would not permit that this be done orally, were it advisable to do so. When the child gets up to read, he is not likely to *stumble*, for he has both the thought and the expression for it, at the start.

While aiming to have the children comprehend the thought, the teacher should not forget,

on the other hand, that this is the *reading* hour, and not the time for much oral instruction and reproduction. There are other recitations in which the child is trained to free oral expression of thought, as in science and literature. Such off-hand oral expression of his own ideas is not the primary aim of the reading lesson. Its purpose is to lend life to the recitation.

3. Steps 1 and 2 deal with *preparation* for the reading. Up to this time, no oral reading has been done. Now we are ready to begin.

Children will generally express the thought with the proper emphasis if they not only *see* its meaning but also *feel* it. Suppose the children are interested in the thought of the piece, they still fail, sometimes, to give the proper emphasis. How can the teacher by *questioning*, get them to realize the more important part of the thought?

(a) The teacher has gone deeper into the meaning than have the children. Her questions should be such as to make *real* to the children the more emphatic part of the thought; *e. g.*, in the Riverside Primer we have, "Poor Bun, good dog, did you think I meant to hit you?" John reads, "Do you think I meant to *hit* you?" The teacher says, "You may be Bun, John. What is it that you do not want Bun to think?" ("That I *meant* to hit him.") "But you did mean to hit something. What was it you did not mean to hit? Tell Bun." ("I did not *mean* to hit *you*.") Now ask him if he

thought that you did." ("Did you think I *meant* to hit *you?*")

(b) When the story is in the form of a dialogue, the children may personate the characters in the story. Thus, getting into the real spirit of the piece, their emphasis will naturally fall where it properly belongs.

(c) Sometimes the teacher will find it necessary to *show* the child how to read a passage properly, by reading it himself. It is seldom best to do this—certainly not if the correct expression can be reached through questioning.

Many a teacher *makes a practice* of giving the proper emphasis to the child, he copying it from her voice. Frequently, children taught in this way, can read one piece after another in their readers with excellent expression, but when questioned, show that their minds are a blank as to the meaning of what they are reading.

In working for expression, a great many teachers waste the time and energy of the pupils by *indefinite directions*. The emphasis is not correctly placed, so the teacher says, "I do not like that; try it again, May." Now, May has no idea in what *particular point* she has failed, so she gives it again, very likely as she gave it before, or she may put the emphasis on some other word, hoping by so doing to please the teacher. "Why, no, May, you surely can do better than that," says the teacher. So May makes another fruitless attempt, when the teacher, disgusted, calls on an-

other pupil to show her how to read. May has gained no clearer insight into the thought than she started out with, no power to grapple more successfully with a similar difficulty another time, and has lost, partly, at least—her interest in the piece. She has been bothered and discouraged, and the class wearied.

Sometimes when the expression is otherwise good, the children pitch their voices too high or too low. Natural tones must be insisted upon. A good aid to the children in this respect is the habitual example of quiet, clear tones in the teacher.

Another fault, of otherwise good reading, is a failure to enunciate distinctly. Children are inclined to slight many sounds, especially at the end of the words, and the teacher is apt to think, "That doesn't make so very much difference, since they are only children. When they get older they will see that their pronunciation is babyish, and adopt a correct form." This is unsound reasoning. Every time the child says *las* for *last* he is establishing more firmly a *habit*, which, if he overcomes, it will be with much difficulty.

In the pronunciation of words as well as in the reading of a sentence, much time is wasted through failure to point out the exact *word*, and the *syllable* in the *word*, in which the mistake has been made. The child cannot improve unless he knows in what particular there is room for improvement.*

NOTE.—Much of the above treatment of primary reading is taken from an article in the *Public-School Journal*, by Mrs. Lida B. McMurry.

CHAPTER VI.

Class-room Method in Reading.

1. The doorway.

There is a strong comfort in the idea that in the preparation of a masterpiece for a reading class the teacher may be dealing with a unity of thought in a variety of relations that makes the study a comprehensive culture-product both to herself and to the children. To become a student of *Hiaiwatha* as a whole and in its relations to Indian life and tradition, early aboriginal history, and Longfellow's connection with the same, is to throw a deep glance into history and anthropology and to recognize literature as the permanent form of expressing their best spirit. There are a good many side-lights that a teacher needs to get from history and other literature in order to see a literary masterpiece in its true setting. It is the part of the poet to make his work intensely real and ideal, the two elements that appeal with trenchant force to children. The teacher needs not only to see the graphic pictures drawn by the artist, but to gather about these central points of view other collateral, explanatory facts that give a deeper setting to the picture. Fortunately, such study as this is not burdensome.

There is a joyousness and sparkle to it that can relieve many an hour of tedium. Literature in its best forms is recreation and brings an infusion of spiritual energy. We should not allow ourselves to confuse it with those more humdrum forms of school employment, like spelling, figuring, reading in the formal sense, grammar, writing, etc. Literature is the spiritual side of school effort, the uplands of thought, where gushing springs well from the roots and shade of over-arching trees. There is jollity and music, beauty and grandeur, the freshness of cool breezes and of mountain scenery in such profusion as to satisfy the exuberance of youthful spirit, and to infuse new energy into old and tired natures. If the teacher can only get out of the narrow streets of the town and from between the dead walls of the schoolroom, up among the meadows and groves and brooks, in company with Bryant or Longfellow or Whittier, if she can only take a draft of these spirit-waters before walking into the schoolroom, her thought and conduct will be tempered into a fit instrument of culture.

The teacher's preparation is not only in the intellectual grasp of the thought, but in the sympathy, feeling, and pleasure germane to a classic. The esthetic and emotional elements, the charm of poetry and the sparkle of wit and glint of literary elegance and aptness, are what give relish and delight to true literary products. Literature ap-

peals to the whole nature and not to the intellect alone. It is not superficial and formal, but deep and spiritual. The teacher who reads a classic like *Marmion*, thoughtfully dwelling upon the historic pictures, calling to mind other of Scott's stories and the earlier struggle between Scotland and England, is drinking at the fresh fountains and sources of some of the best parts of European history. The clear and rock-rimmed lakes of Scotland, her rugged mountains and ruined castle walls, are not more delightful to the traveler than the pictures of life and history that appear in *Tales of a Grandfather*, *Rob Roy*, *Marmion*, and *Lady of the Lake*. To paint these stirring panoramic views of Scotch adventure and prowess upon the imagination of the young is to invigorate their thought with the real sentiment of patriotism, and with appreciation for manly struggle, endurance, and spirit. The vivid insight it gives into feudal society in church and court and castle, on battlefield, and in dining hall, among the rude peasantry and the unlettered nobility was found more life-like and lasting than the usual results of historical study.

The moment we take a longer masterpiece and examine it as a representative piece of human life, or as a typical portraiture of an historical epoch, it becomes the converging point for much lively and suggestive knowledge, deep and strong social interests and convincing personification of moral impulses.

The best preparation, therefore, a teacher can make for a class is a spiritual and spirited one. At first the linguistic, formal, verbal mastery of literature, its critical examination, even its elocution, should remain in the background both for teacher and children. Let the direct impress of the thought, motive and emotion of the characters be unimpeded; give the author a chance to speak direct to the hearts of the children and the avenue toward the desired results in formal reading will be left wide open.

We would not deny that a certain labor is required of the teacher in such preparation. But, in the main, it is a refreshing kind of labor. If it brings a feeling of weariness, it is the kind that conduces to sound and healthy sleep. It invokes a feeling of inward power and of accumulated rich resource that helps us to meet with confidence the emergencies and opportunities of instruction.

2. In the *assignment of the lesson* the teacher has a chance to give the children a glimpse of the pleasure that awaits them, and to catch a little of the enthusiasm which her own study has awakened. This should be done briefly and by significant suggestion. In first introducing a longer work it will pay to occupy more time than is usual in recitations in opening up the new subject; if it is historical, in locating the time, circumstances, and geographical setting. The chief aim of

the assignment should be to awaken curiosity and interest which may be strong enough to lead to a full and appreciative study of the lesson. A second aim of the assignment is to pave the way to an easier mastery of verbal difficulties that arise, such as new and difficult words, obscure or involved passages. The first aim is a substantial and fruitful one. It approaches the whole reading lesson from the side of interest and spirit. It seeks to plant direct incentives and suggestions deep enough in the mind to start effort. The assignment should take it for granted that natural interest and absorption in the thought will lead directly to that kind of vigorous effort and mastery that will secure natural and expressive oral reading. Look well to the deeper springs of thought and action and the formal reading will open just the avenue needed to realize good expression.

Skill, originality, and teaching art are much needed in the assignment. It is not how much the teacher says, but the suggestiveness of it, the problems raised, the questions whose answer lies in the examination of the lesson. The reference to previous readings which bear resemblance to this selection, the inquiry into children's experiences, sets them to thinking.

Sometimes it pays to spend five or ten minutes in attacking the difficult words and meanings of the lesson assigned. Let the class read on and

discover words or phrases that puzzle them. Let difficult forms be put on the board and syllabicated if necessary. A brief study of synonymous words and phrases may be in place.

It is a mistake to decline all helpful and suggestive study of the next lesson in class, on the ground that it invalidates the self-activity of children. Self-activity is, indeed, the chief aim of a good assignment. It is designed to stimulate the children to energetic and well-directed effort. Self-activity is not encouraged by requiring children to struggle with obstacles they have not the ability to surmount. Pronouncing new words and searching for dictionary meanings is often made a mechanical labor which is irksome and largely fruitless, because the wrong pronunciations are learned and the definitions do not fit. Before children are required to use the dictionary in pronouncing and defining words, they need careful exercises in how to use and to interpret the dictionary.

The teacher needs to make a study of the art of assigning lessons. Clearness and simplicity, so as to give no ground for misunderstandings, are the result of thoughtful preparation on the teacher's part. There is always danger of giving too much or too little, of careless and unsteady requirements, over-burdening the children one day, and even forgetting the next day to assign a definite task. The forethought and precision with

which a teacher assigns her lessons is one of the best tests of her prudence and success in teaching.

It is necessary also to be on one's guard against hasty assignments. Even when proper care has been taken in planning the next lesson, the time slips by with urgent work, and the signal for dismissal comes before time has been taken for any clear assignment.

3. The major part of time and effort in reading classes should be given to the *reading proper*, and not to *oral discussions*, explanations, and collateral information and references. It is possible to have interesting discussions and much use of reference books, and still make small progress in expressive reading. The main thing should not be lost sight of. We should learn to march steadily forward through lively and energetic thought toward expressive reading. There is no other right approach to good reading except through a lively grasp of the thought, sentiment, and style of the author. But the side-lights that come from collateral reading and reference are of great significance. They are something like the scenery on the stage. They make the effect more intense and real. They supply a background of environment and association which give the ideas more local significance and a stronger basis in the whole complex of ideas.

If the teacher knows just what references will

throw added light upon the lesson, what books and pages will be directly helpful, if he can appoint different pupils to look up particular references and sometimes even go to the library with them and search for the references, in grades from the fifth through the eighth the result may be very helpful. In the class recitation it is necessary to gather up the fruits of this reference work with as little waste of time as possible, recognizing that it is purely collateral to the main purpose.

Pictures and maps are useful oftentimes as references. As children advance in the grades, they are capable of greater independence and judgment in the use of references. General, loose, and indefinite references are a sign of ignorance, carelessness, and lack of preparation on the teacher's part. They are discouraging and unprofitable to children. But we desire to see children broadening their views, extending their knowledge of books and of how to use them. The amount of good literature that can be well treated and read in the class is small, but much suggestive outside home- and vacation-reading may be encouraged that will open a still wider and richer area of personal study.

4. In spite of all the precautions of the teacher, in spite of lively interest and intelligent study by the children, there will be many haltings and blunders, many inaccuracies in the use of eye and

voice. These faults spring partly from *habit* and previous home influences. The worst faults are often those of which a child is unconscious, so habitual have they become. If we are to meet these difficulties wisely we must start and keep up a strong momentum in the class. There should be a steady and strong current of effort in which all share. This depends, as has been often said, upon the power of the selection to awaken the thought and feeling of the children. It depends equally upon the pervasive spirit and energy of the teacher. If we try to analyze this complex phenomenon we may find that, so far as the children are concerned, two elements are present, natural and spontaneous absorption in the ideas and sensibilities awakened by the author, and the bracing conviction that sustained effort is expected and required by the teacher. Children, to read well, must be free; they must feel the force of ideas and of the emotions and convictions awakened by them. They must also be conscious of that kind of authority and control which insists upon serious and sustained effort. Freedom to exercise their own powers and obedience to a controlling influence are needful. If the teacher can secure this right movement and ferment in a class, she will be able to correct the errors and change bad habits into the desired form of expression. The correction of errors, in the main, should be quiet, incidental, suggestive, not disturbing

the child's thought and effort, not destroying the momentum of his sentiment and feeling. Let him move on firmly and vigorously, only direct his movement here and there, modify his tone by easy suggestions and pertinent questions, and encourage him as far as possible in his own effort to appreciate and express the author's idea.

In reading lessons there are certain purely formal exercises that are very helpful. The single and concert pronunciation of difficult or unusual words that come up in old and new lessons, the vocal exercises in syllabication, and in vowel and consonant drill, are examples. They should be quick and vigorous and preliminary to their application in lessons.

5. The teacher is only a guide and interpreter. With plenty of reserve power, he should only draw upon it occasionally. His chief business is not to show the children how to read by example nor to be always explaining and amplifying the thought of the author. His aim should be to best call the minds of the children into strong action through the stimulation of the author's thought and to go a step further and reproduce and mould this thought into oral expression.

In order to call out the best efforts of children, a teacher needs to study well the *art of questioning*. The range of possibilities in questioning is very wide. If a rational, sensible question is regarded as the central or zero point there are many degrees

below it in the art of questioning and many degrees above it. Below it is a whole host of half-rational or useless questions which would better be left unbothered. What does this word mean? Why didn't you study your lesson? Why weren't you paying attention? What is the definition of also? How many mistakes did Mary make?

Much time is sometimes wasted in trying to answer aimless or trivial questions. Peter, what does this strange word mean, or how do you pronounce it? Ethel may try it. Who thinks he can pronounce it better? Johnny, try it? Perhaps somebody knows how it ought to be? Sarah, can't you pronounce it? Finally after various efforts, the teacher passes on to something else without even making clear the true pronunciation or meaning. This is worse than killing time. It is befuddling children. A question should aim clearly at some important idea, and should bring out a definite result. The children should have time to think but not to guess and dawdle, and then to be left groping in the dark.

The chief aim of questions is to arouse vigor and variety of thought as a means of better appreciation and expression. Children read poorly because they do not see the meaning or do not feel the force of the sentiment. They give wrong emphasis and intonation. A good question is like a flash of lightning which suddenly reveals our standing ground and surroundings, and gives the

child a chance to strike out again for himself. His intelligence lights up, he sees the point and responds with a significant rendering of the thought. But the teacher must be a thinker to ask simple and pertinent questions. He can't go at it in a loose and lumbering fashion. Lively and sympathetic and appreciative of the child's moods and feelings must he be, as well as clear and definite in his own perception of the author's meaning.

Questioning for meaning is equivalent to that for securing expression and thus two birds are hit with one stone. A pointed question energizes thought along a definite line and leads to a more intense and vivid perception of the meaning. This is just the vantage-ground we desire in order to secure good expression. We wish children not to imitate, but first to see and feel and then to express in becoming wise the thought as they see it and feel it. This makes reading a genuine performance, not a parrot-like formalism.

6. Trying to awaken the mental energy and action of a class as they move on through a masterpiece, requires constant watchfulness to keep alive their *sense-perceptions* and memories and to touch their imaginations into constructive effort at every turn in the road. Through the direct action of the senses the children have accumulated much variety of sense-materials, of country and town, of hill, valley, river, lake, fields, buildings, indus-

tries, roads, homes, gardens, seasons. Out of this vast and varied quarry they are able to gather materials with which to construct any landscape or situation you may desire. Give the children abundance of opportunity to use these collected riches and to construct, each in his own way, the scenes and pictures that the poet's art so vividly suggests. Many of the questions we ask of children are designed simply to recall and reawaken images which lie dormant in their minds, or, on the other hand, to find out whether they can combine their old sense-perceptions so skillfully and vividly as to realize the present situation. Keen and apt questions will reach down into the depth of a child's life-experiences and bring up concrete images which the fancy then modifies and adjusts to the present need. The teacher may often suggest something in his own observations to kindle like memories in theirs. Or, if the subject seems unfamiliar, he may bring on a picture from book or magazine. Sometimes a sketch or diagram on the board may give sense-precision and definiteness to the object discussed, even though it be rudely drawn. This constant appeal to what is real and tangible and experimental, not only locates things definitely in time and space, makes clear and plain what was hazy or meaningless, awakens interest by connecting the story or description with former experiences, but it sets in action the creative imagination which shapes and

builds up new and pleasing structures, combining old and new. This kind of mental elaboration which reaches back into the senses and forward into the imagination, is what gives nobility and adjustability to our mental resources. It is not stiff and rigid and refractory knowledge that we need. Ideas may retain their truth and strength, their inward quality, and still submit to infinite variations and adjustments. Water is one of the most serviceable of all nature's compounds, because it has such mobility of form, such capacity to dissolve and take into solution other substances, or of being absorbed and even lost sight of in other bodies. The ideas we have gathered and stored up from all sources are our building materials; the imagination is the architect who conceives the plan and directs the use of different materials in the growth of the new structures. The teacher's chief function in reading classes is, on the one hand, to see that children revive and utilize their sense-knowledge, and on the other to wake the sleeping giant and set him to work to build the beauteous structures for which the materials have been prepared. But for this, teachers could be dispensed with. As Socrates said, they are only helpers, they stand by, not to perform the work, but to gently guide, to stimulate, and now and then to lend a helping hand over a bad place.

Explanations, therefore, on the teacher's part, should be clear and brief, purely tributary to the

main effort. In younger classes when the children have, as yet, little ability to use references, the teacher may add much, especially if it be concrete, graphic, picturesque, and bearing directly upon the subject. But as children grow more self-reliant they can look up facts and references and bring more material themselves to the elucidation of the lesson. But even in adult classes the rich experience of a trained and wise teacher whose illustrations are apt and graphic and criticisms incisive, is an intense pleasure and stimulus to students.

7. In the class-room we always have more or less trouble with positions in sitting and standing, posture in holding book, etc. In this as in so many other things, it seems to us that we ought to go back to the hilltops in order to accumulate the proper momentum in descending into the valley. Suggestions for improvement along these lines of physical mannerisms should be gentle and quiet, not harsh and brusque. A glance of the eye or a motion of the hand will often do more good than a yell or a scold. Establish respect for gentleness, kindness, firmness, and justice, and then apply the brakes gently but not so quickly as to stop the train suddenly and shake up the passengers. If we can only get the children into the right mental attitude, their bodies will come into shape, not instantly but gradually. Freedom and self-possession on the

child's part will soon become a source of joy both to him and to the teacher. Banish fear and trembling from the class-room, introduce self-respect and mutual confidence and matter for energetic thinking. Then we shall be able to touch the springs gently here and there as we move steadily on and bring the bodies of the children out of their awkward habits into the proper adjustment and harmony.

8. Among the resources which every teacher will employ in a moderate degree are dialogue, concert, and imitation reading.

Even in third grade the fables give the children a chance to impersonate animals or plants and to respond to each other in conversations. In the highest forms of literature for adults the same situation recurs in Shakespeare's plays, in Schiller, and all the dramatists and novelists. It involves an appeal to the imagination that arouses interest and pleasure.

Certain passages in prose and verse have a rhythmic energy and swing which adapts them to concert reading. Not infrequently it corresponds to the facts when several persons are represented as speaking together, as in the old Greek Chorus, in our battle-songs, and in pieces set to music. Such chorus reading not only gives variety and establishes a normal style to which all conform, but it produces an energy and feeling that do not spring from single reading. Yet everyone knows the limitations of concert-drill.

While reading by imitation can be and should be banished from our schools as a prevailing mode of learning to read, it will retain none the less, within proper limits, a potent influence. A good reader will be imitated, consciously or unconsciously. An even superficial observer may notice common traits that generally characterize our reading in schools, and others quite different that characterize German and other foreign schools. It is a good thing once in a while for children to hear some first-class reading, so as to acquire a better notion of what true reading means. If not more than once a week for five minutes a teacher would read something which he had carefully thought out and prepared, so as to give great naturalness and fitness of expression, the children would be benefited; not by reading the same selection in the same way, but by catching the spirit and applying it later in their own effort. For this reason it is well for children to hear readers of ability who are not too elocutionary. This suggests, also, that in certain classes of reading, such as characterizations, he is the true reader who can imitate best the truth of nature and experience.

9. In order to keep up the right interest and movement it is necessary to give considerable *variety* to the work. A teacher's good sense and tact should be like a thermometer which registers the mental temperature of the class. If kept too

long at a single line of effort, its monotony induces carelessness and inattention, while a total change to some other order of exercise would awake their interest and zeal. Variety is needed also within the compass of a single recitation because there are several preliminaries and varieties of preparatory drill which conduce to good rendering of any selection. Such are vocal exercises in consonants and vowels, pronunciation and syllabication of new or difficult words, physical exercises to put the body and nervous system into proper tone, the assignment of the next lesson requiring a peculiar effort and manner of treatment, the report and discussion of references, concert drills, the study of meanings—synonyms and derivations, illustrations and information by the teacher, introduction of other illustrative matter as pictures, drawings, maps, and diagrams. Variety can be given to each lesson in many ways according to the ingenuity of the teacher. If we are reading a number of short selections, they themselves furnish different varieties and types of prose and verse. The dramatist or novelist provides for such variety by introducing a series of diverse scenes all leading forward to a common end.

10. Parallel to the requirement of variety is the equally important demand that children should learn to do *one thing at a time* and learn to do it well. This may appear contradictory to the for-

mer requirement, but the skill and tact of the teacher is what should solve this seeming contradiction. It is a fact that we try to do too many things in each reading lesson. We fail to pound on one nail long enough to drive it in. Reading lessons often resemble a child pounding nails into a board. He strikes one nail a blow or two, then another, and so on until a dozen or more are in all stages of incompleteness. We too often allow the recitation hour to end with a lot of such incomplete efforts. Good reading is not like moving a house, when it is all carried along in one piece. We shall reach better results if we concentrate attention and effort during a recitation along the line of a narrow aim. At least this seems true of the more formal, mechanical side of reading. It is better to try to break up bad habits, one at a time, rather than to make a general, indefinite onslaught upon them all together. Suppose, for example, that the teacher suggests as an aim of the lesson *conversational reading*, or that which sounds like pupils talking to each other. Many dialogue selections admit of such an aim as this. If this aim is set up at the beginning of the lesson, the children's minds will be rendered acute in this direction, they will be on the alert for this kind of game. Each child who reads is scrutinized by teacher and pupils to see how near he comes to the ideal. A conscious effort begins to dominate the class to reach this specific goal. Children

may close their eyes and listen to see if the reading has the right sound. A girl or boy goes into an adjoining entry or dressing-room and listens to see if those in the class are reading or talking. The enthusiasm and class spirit awakened are very helpful. Not that a whole recitation should be given up to that sort of thing, but it is the characteristic effort of the lesson. When the children practice the next lesson at home they will have this point in mind.

For several days this sort of specific, definite aim at a narrow result may be followed up in the class till the children begin to acquire power in this direction. What was, at first, painfully conscious effort, begins to assume the form of habit, and when this result is achieved, we may drop this aim as a leading one in the recitation, and turn our attention to some different line of effort. *Distinct pronunciation* of sounds is one of the things that we are always aiming at, in a general way, and never getting. Why not set this up in a series of recitations as a definite aim, and resort to a series of devices to lay bare the kind of faults the children are habitually guilty of? Give them a chance to correct these faults, and awake the class spirit in this direction. It will not be difficult to convince them that they are not pronouncing their final consonants, like *d*, *t*, *l*, *m*, *r*, and *k*. Keep the attention for a lesson to this kind of error till there is recognizable improvement.

Then notice the short vowel sounds in the unaccented syllables, and give them search-light attention. Notice later the syllables that children commonly slur over. Mark these fugitives and see if they continue so invisible and inaudible. They are like Jack the Giant Killer, when he put on his cloak of invisibility, or like Perseus under similar circumstances. See if we can find these fellows who seem to masquerade and dodge about behind their companions. Then some of the long vowels and diphthongs will require investigation. They are not all so open-faced and above board as they might be. When children have such a simple and distinct aim in view, they are ready to work with a vim and to exert themselves in a conscious effort at improvement. Keep this aim foremost in the recitation, although other requirements of good reading are not wholly neglected.

After a definite line of effort has been strongly developed as one of the above described, it is possible thereafter to keep it in mind with slight attention. But if no special drill has ever been devoted to it for a given length of time, it has not been brought so distinctly to mind as to produce a lasting impression and to lay the basis for habit. Besides the two aims, clear articulation and conversational tones, there are others that may be labored at similarly. Appreciation of the thought as expressed by the reading is a rich field for critical study of a piece and as a basis for observ-

ing and judging the children's reading. This idea is well implied by such questions as follow: Is that what the passage means? Have you given expression to the author's meaning by emphasis on this word? Does your rendering of this passage make good sense? Compare it with what precedes: How did the man feel when he said this? What do we know of this character that would lead us to expect such words from him? This line of questions has a wide and varied range. The chief thing is to scrutinize the thought in all the light attainable and appeal to the child's own judgment as to the suitableness of the tone and emphasis to the thought. Does it sound right? Is that what the passage means?

Each characteristic form of prose or verse has a peculiar style and force of expression that calls for a corresponding oral rendering. There is the serious and massive, though simple, diction of Webster's speeches, with its smooth and rounded periods, calling for slow and steady and energetic reading. We should notice this characteristic of an author and grow into sympathy with his feeling, language, and mental movement. In Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*, the ring of martial music is in the words and it swells out into rapid and rousing speech which should correspond to the thought. In *Evangeline*, the flow of language is placid and gentle and rhythmical, and in consonance with the gentle faith and hope of Evan-

geline. Every true literary product has its own character, which the genius of the author has impressed upon its language and moulded into its structure, and which calls for a rendering fit and appropriate. Before completing a selection, we should detect this essence and quality and bring our reading to reveal it. The places should be pointed out where it comes into prominence.

When completing such a work of art there should be given opportunity to bring all the varied elements discovered and worked out during its reading to a complete expression. The children will naturally memorize certain passages which strike their fancy. Other passages have been suggested by the teachers for different pupils to memorize. In one of the closing lessons let the children recite these parts before the class. If the teacher has succeeded in calling out the live interest of the class during the previous study, such a lesson will be a joy to both pupils and teacher. One or two of the children may also volunteer or be appointed to make an oral statement of the argument, which will give freedom to natural and effective speech. Such a round-up of the reading lessons at the end of a series of interesting studies is a rich experience to the whole class.

Besides the important special aims thus far suggested, which should each stand out clear for a series of lessons until its value is real-

ized and worked over into habit, there are other subordinate aims that deserve particular and individual consideration, and may now and then become the dominant purpose of a lesson. Such are the correction of sing-song in reading, the use of the dictionary, the study of synonyms and antitheses, the comparisons and figures of speech, exercises in sight reading of unfamiliar selections, quotations from selections and masterpieces already read, study of the lives and works of authors.

Reading is a many-sided study, and to approach its difficulties with success we must take them up one at a time, conquering them in detail. Good housekeepers and cooks are accustomed to lay out a series of dinners in which the chief article of diet is varied from day to day as follows: chicken pie with oysters, veal pot-pie, stewed fish, broiled beefsteak, venison roast, bean soup with ham, roast mutton, baked fish, roast quail, roast beef, baked chicken with parsnips, etc. Such a series of dinners gives a healthy variety and relish. It is better for most people than the bill of fare at a large hotel, where there is so much variety and sameness each day. When we try each day to do everything in a reading lesson, we grasp more than our hands can hold and most of it falls out ill. Children are pleased and encouraged by actual progress in surmounting difficulties when they are presented one at a

time and opportunity is given for complete mastery. The children should labor consciously and vigorously at one line of effort, be it distinctness or rhythm, or emphasis, or conversational tone, till decided improvement and progress are attained and the ease of right habit begins to show itself. Then we can turn to some new field, securing and holding the vantage-ground of our foregoing effort by occasional reminders.

11. One of the best tests applied to a reading class is their degree of *class-attention*. The steadiness and responsiveness with which the whole class follow the work is a fair measure of successful teaching. To have but one child read at a time while the others wait their turn or scatter their thoughts, is very bad. It is a good sign of a teacher's skill and efficiency to see every child in energetic pursuit of the reading. It conduces to the best progress in that study and is the genesis of right mental habit.

Attention is a *sine qua non* to good teaching, and yet it is a result rather than a cause. It is a ripe fruit rather than the spring promise of it. The provisions which lead up to steady attention are deserving of a teacher's study and patient scrutiny. She may command attention for a moment by sheer force of will and personality, but it must have something to feed upon the next moment and the next, or it will be wandering in distant fields. So great and indispensable is the value

of attention that some teachers try to secure it at too heavy a cost. They command, threaten, punish. They resort to severity and cruelty. But the more formidable the teacher becomes the more difficult for a child to do his duty. Here, again, we can best afford to go back to the sources from which attention naturally springs, interesting subject of thought, vivid and concrete perceptions, lively and suggestive appeal to the imagination, the sphere of noble thought and emotion, variety and movement in mental effort, a mutual sympathy and harmony between teacher and pupil.

It is indeed well for the teacher to gauge his work by the kind and intensity of attention he can secure. If the class has dropped into slothful and habitual carelessness and inattention, he will have to give them a few severe jolts; he must drop questions when they are least expected. He must be very alert to detect a listless child and wake him into action. The vigor, personal will, and keen watchfulness of the teacher must be a constant resource. On the other hand, let him look well to the thought, the feeling, and capacity of the children and give them matter which is equal to their merits.

The treadmill style of reading which repeats and repeats, doing the same things day by day, going through the like round of mechanical motions, should give way to a rational, spirited,

variegated method which arouses interest and variety of thought and moves ever toward a conscious goal.

12. In reading one selection or work it is well to trace back numerous references and suggestions to similar words, phrases, and ideas that have occurred in previous studies. A single word not infrequently suggests a whole passage; a figure of speech is like one that was used by the same or another author in former readings. This is a choice study of thought and language, a favorite mode of review and refreshment, and cultivates a habit of thoughtful retrospect and use of acquired funds of great educative value. Children themselves take much pleasure in this kind of comparative study and memorizing. It encourages a keener perception of thought and expression and a more definite deposit in the memory of fruitful ideas in exquisite form.

13. There are two kinds of reading which should be cultivated in reading lessons, although they seem to fall a little apart from the main highway of effort. They are first, *sight-reading* of supplementary matter for the purpose of cultivating a quick and accurate grasp of new thought and forms. When we leave school the chief value of reading will be the power it gives to interpret quickly and grasp firmly the ideas as they present themselves in the magazines, papers, and books we read. Good efforts in school reading will lead

forward gradually to that readiness of thought and fluency of perception which will give freedom and mastery of new reading matter. To develop this ability and to regulate it into habit, we must give children a chance to read quite a little at sight. We need supplementary readers in sets which can be put into the hands of children for this purpose. The same books will answer for several classes and may be passed from room to room of similar grade.

The reading matter we select for this purpose may be classic and of the best quality, just as well as to be limited to information and geographical readers which are much inferior. There are first-class books of science and of travel which are entirely serviceable for this purpose and much richer in culture. They continue the line of study in classic literature and give ground for suggestive comparisons and reviews which should not be neglected. There is a strong tendency in our time to put inferior reading matter in the form of information readers, science primers, short history stories, geographical readers, newspapers, and specially prepared topics on current events into reading classes. These things may do well enough in their proper place in geography, history, natural science, or general lessons, but they should appear scarcely if at all in reading lessons. Preserve the reading hour for that which is choicest in our prose and verse, mainly in the form of shorter or longer masterpieces of literature.

The regular reading exercises should give the children a lively and attractive introduction to some of the best authors, and a taste for the strength and beauty of their productions. But the field of literature is so wide and varied that many things can only be suggested which will remain for the future leisure and choice of readers. Children might, however, be made acquainted with some of the best book suited to their age for which there is not school time. Many of the best books like *Ivanhoe*, *Quentin Durward*, *John Halifax*, *Adam Bede*, and *Nicholas Nicolby*, can not be read in school. They should be in the school library and the teacher should refer to them and others as suggested by the regular reading, which give deeper and wider views into life.

CHAPTER VII.

LIST OF BOOKS—SUGGESTIONS.

The following list of books is designed to take the place of the readers in the regular reading work of the eight grades. Besides the general discussions of these books in the preceding chapters, a few additional explanations are necessary to make plain the grounds upon which this particular selection and arrangement of books is based.

1. We have aimed at the best English classics in prose and verse which suit the age and capacity of children in each grade. The books apportioned to each grade are divided into three series. The *first series* usually contains the more familiar books which have been frequently tested. They are arranged also in the order suggested for their use. The *second series* includes books of similar quality and rank which, according to the judgment of the teacher, may be substituted for some or all of those in the first series. The second series supplies a wider range for selection and experiment and for eventually sifting out of the best. The *third series* consists of books which may be read to the class on special occasions, or kept for reference use

by the children in connection with topics suggested by the regular reading, or for voluntary home reading which the school may often encourage. Some of the books in the third series would serve well for regular reading exercises, or for training in sight-reading.

2. This list of books is of course tentative and incomplete. There are other literary works as good and perhaps better for our purpose, but not a few difficulties stand in the way of the best selection. Some of the best materials are scattered in books not available for school purposes. The readers in use for many years have not qualified us for the best selection. Many of the finest of our longer classics have not been tested much in school use. There is, however, an abundance of choice English classics, complete, well printed and bound, in cheap school-book form. The chief difficulty, after all, is in selecting and arranging the best of an abundant and varied collection of excellent literature. This inspiring problem lies unsolved at the threshold of every teacher's work. It requires extensive knowledge of literature and experience in its use in classes. A masterpiece may be read in several grades and teachers will differ in judging its true place. Schools and classes differ also in their capacity and previous preparation for classic readings, so that no course of reading will fit all schools or, perhaps, any two schools. Many principals will prefer to use the

books one or two grades lower than here indicated. Every teacher should use such a list according to his best individual judgment as based upon the needs of his school. This list was discussed and partly made out in conference with a number of experienced superintendents and much variety of opinion was expressed as to the best grade for the use of a number of the classics.

3. The books chosen for each grade are designed to be a suitable combination of prose and poetry, of short and long selections from history, science, and letters. Variety in subject-matter and style is required in each grade, although certain strong individual characteristics are expected to appear in the literature of each year's work. Many of the shorter poems fit in well with longer masterpieces in prose and verse. Some of the epics, myths, and historical episodes are told in both prose and verse. The children may well meet and study them in both forms. If from four to six larger classics could be read each year, and these could bring out the style and quality of so many authors, if a number of suitable shorter classics could be read and related to the former, the many-sided influence of literature would prove each year effective. Literature is the broadest of all subjects, both as a basis of culture and for the unification of the varied studies. It touches every phase of experience and knowledge along its higher levels and overlooks the whole field of life

from the standpoint of the seer and poet. The classic readings should aim at the completeness, variety, and elevation of thought which literature alone can give. Every year's literature should open the gates to meadow and woodland, to park and fruitful fields, into rich and shaded valleys, and up to free and sunny hill tops and mountains.

4. The list of books for each year includes two or three books of miscellaneous collections of classics in prose and verse. Many of the selections are short and some fragmentary. Such are the three volumes of Open Sesame, the Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics, Children's Treasury of English Song, and Book of Golden Deeds. The Heart of Oak Books, Seven American Classics and Masterpieces of American Literature contain also selections of a miscellaneous character. In each of the books named is found a variety of material suited perhaps to two or three grades. In most of the books just named it is not intended in our plan that all the selections should be read through in succession. It will be better for the teacher to select from those collections such choice poems, stories, etc., as will enrich and supplement the longer classics and give that added variety so needful. Many of the finest classic poems in our language are short and should not be omitted from our school-course. They should be read and some of them memorized by the children. It would be well if the teacher had in each

grade one or two sets of such books of choice miscellaneous materials from which to select occasional reading. The regular readers used by the children would consist of the longer masterpieces which would be supplemented by the shorter selections. In this way greater unity and variety might be achieved within the limits of each grade.

5. Information books and supplementary readers in history, geography, and natural science have been excluded, in the main, from our lists. The test of literary excellence has been applied to most of the books chosen. De Quincey's distinction between the literature of power and the literature of knowledge is our line of demarcation. It seems to us probable that the future will call for a still more stringent adherence to this principle of selection. Information readers are good and necessary in their place in geography, history, and natural science; but they are not good enough to take the place of classics in reading lessons. The only exceptions to the rule of classics are the prose renderings of the old classics, as the *Story of the Odyssey*, and the biographical stories from history. Both these have so much of interest and stimulus for the young that they seem to harmonize with our plan. But criticism may yet expose their inadequacy.

It is our plan, in brief, to limit the reading work mainly to the choice masterpieces of the

best authors, and to render these studies as fruitful as possible in spiritual power. If supplementary readings are used at all, let them be those which will strengthen the influence of the classics.

It is our purpose to collect in the Special Methods devoted to geography and natural science a full list of the supplementary readers and information books in those subjects.

6. In our list, however, is included quite a number of classic renderings of science and nature topics. Such are Wake Robin, Birds and Bees, A Hunting of the Deer, etc., Sharp Eyes, etc., Succession of Forest Trees, Up and Down the Brooks, Water Babies, the Foot-Path Way, Madam How and Lady Why. Even Nature Stories for Young Readers in first and second grades are almost a classic rendering of topics suited to these years.

These books, however, belong to the literature of power. They look at nature through the eyes of poet and artist and enthusiast. They are not cold, matter-of-fact delineations. They unfold the esthetic and human side of nature, the divinity of flower and tree. These books are the communings of the soul with nature and are closely related in spirit to the poems of nature in Bryant, Wordsworth, Tennyson, and other poets. There is a deep chasm between them and our text-books in science, which needs bridging over, perhaps,

but is none the less a chasm. The same break is found between text-books and true science study. Now that science is beginning to be taught objectively, experimentally, and inductively, there will be much less of an hiatus at this stage, because there is so much that is powerfully stimulating in nature study.

7. There are certain peculiar *difficulties* connected with the reading of longer classics which are much less frequently met with in the usual school readers. These difficulties are of such a real and serious kind that many teachers are apt to be discouraged before success is attained. Complete classics like Webster's speeches, Julius Cæsar, Snow Bound, Marmion, and Evangeline have been regarded as too long and difficult for school purposes. We have found, however, that the greater length, if rightly utilized, only intensifies the effect of a masterpiece. The chief objection is the greater language difficulty (hard and unusual words, proper names, etc.,) of the longer classics. This is a real obstacle and must be fairly met. It is impossible to grade down the language and thought of a classic. It is necessary to bring the class up to its level rather than bring it down to theirs. This requires time and skill and perseverance on the teacher's part, and labor and thought in the children. It may require a week or a month to get a class well under way in *Lady of the Lake*, *King of the Golden*

River, or the Sketch Book. But when well done it is a conquest of no mean importance. The language, style, and characteristics of the author are strange and difficult. The scales must drop from children's eyes before they will appreciate Ruskin, or Tennyson, or Emerson. The wings of fancy, the æsthetic sense, do not unfold in a single day. But if these initial difficulties can be overcome we shall emerge soon into the sunlight of interest and success. It takes a degree of faith in good things and patience under difficulties to attain success in classic readings. Even when the teacher thinks he is doing fairly well, the parents sometimes say the work is too hard and the verbal difficulties too great. Generally, however, parents are satisfied when children work hard and are interested.

Again, children, whose reading in the lower grades has been of the information order, lack the imaginative power that is essential to the grasp and enjoyment of any masterpiece. The sleeping or dulled fancy must be awakened. The power to image things, so natural to the poet, must be aroused and exercised. The lack of training in vivid and poetic thought in early years is sure to make itself felt in deficient and languid thought and feeling in the higher grades. But we cannot afford to give up the struggle. We may be forced to begin lower down in the series of books, but

anything less than a classic is not fit for the children.

8. The leading publishing houses are now competing vigorously in bringing out the best complete classics in cheap, durable, well-printed form for school use. In our list the names of the publishers are given. Most of the companies can be addressed in Chicago. Where this is not the case the city is usually given. Most of the companies publish the classics complete. Maynard, Merrill & Co. have abbreviated many of the classics in their extensive series. Some teachers may prefer them for this reason. Most of the books bound in boards or cloth range in price from twenty-five to fifty cents. The pamphlet editions are from twelve to fifteen cents. The larger books of miscellaneous collections and some of the science classics range from seventy-five cents to a dollar and a quarter.

Persons so desiring may order any of the books through the Public-School Publishing Co., of Bloomington, Ill.

Lists of choice reading matter for the grades:

FIRST GRADE—*First Series.*

Cyr's Primer, Ginn & Co.

Cyr's First Reader, Ginn & Co.

First Reader (Hodskins), Ginn & Co.

Riverside Primer and First Reader, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Nature Stories for Young Readers (Plants), D. C. Heath & Co.

Second Series.

Bow-Wow and Mew-Mew, Maynard, Merrill & Co.

A Child's Garden of Verses, Chas. Scribner's Sons.

Selections to be made from the latter book by the teacher.

Third Series.

The Adventures of a Brownie (for teacher) Harper Brothers, New York.

Kindergarten Stories and Morning Talks (Wiltse), Ginn & Co.

Talks for Kindergartens and Primary Schools (Wiltse), Ginn & Co.

The last three books supply interesting stories to read to the children.

In the first half of the first grade the exercises in reading are mostly script lessons on the black-board, and chart work. Reading books, therefore, will be less employed than in any other grade, and these of the simplest possible kind which contain well expressed and interesting thought.

SECOND GRADE—*First Series.*

Nature Stories for Young Readers (Continued), D. C. Heath & Co.

Easy Steps for Little Feet, American Book Co.

Classic Stories for the Little Ones, Public-School Publishing Co., Bloomington, Ill.

Verse and Prose for Beginners, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Grimm's Fairy Tales (Wiltse), Ginn & Co.

Second Series.

Heart of Oak, No. 1, D. C. Heath & Co.

German Fairy Tales (Grimm), Maynard, Merrill & Co.

Fables and Folk Lore (Scudder), Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Nature Stories for Young Readers (Animals), D. C. Heath & Co.

Cat-Tails and Other Tales, Kindergarten Literature Co.

Danish Fairy Tales (Andersen), Maynard, Merrill & Co.

Third Series.

Poetry for Children (Eliot), Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

The Story Hour (Wiggin), Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

The last two books are for use by the teacher, containing selections for occasional use, reading or telling them to the children.

THIRD GRADE—*First Series.*

Robinson Crusoe, Public-School Publishing Co.

Golden Book of Choice Reading, American Book Co.

Aesop's Fables (Stickney), Ginn & Co.

Andersen's Fairy Tales, Part I, Ginn & Co.

Seven Little Sisters, Ginn & Co.

Heart of Oak, No. 2, D. C. Heath & Co.

Second Series.

- Hans Andersen's Stories, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
Fairy Tales in Verse and Prose (Rolfe), Harper & Brothers, New York.
Stories Mother Nature Told Her Children, Ginn & Co.
Andersen's Fairy Tales, Part II, Ginn & Co.
Open Sesame, Part I, Ginn & Co.

The last book contains a variety of selections in verse of the choicest character, which may be used by the teacher to supplement the reading of third and fourth grades. A set of these books for occasional use is needed.

Third Series.

- Child Life in Poetry, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
Child Life in Prose, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
— Stories from the History of Rome, Macmillan.
My Saturday with a Bird Class, D. C. Heath & Co.
Little Lucy's Wonderful Globe (Yonge), Macmillan.
Robinson Crusoe, Maynard, Merrill & Co.
Arabian Nights, Aladdin, Maynard, Merrill & Co.

The third list consists of books which may be occasionally read to the class. Some of them may be simple enough for sight-reading. They may serve also for collateral or home reading.

FOURTH GRADE—First Series.

- Hawthorne's Wonder Book, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
Stories of the Old World (Church), Ginn & Co.
Ulysses Among the Phæacians (Bryant), Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
Kingsley's Water Babies, Macmillan, Ginn & Co.

Six Stories from the Arabian Nights, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Gulliver's Voyage to Lilliput, Maynard, Merrill & Co.

Second Series.

Kingsley's Greek Heroes, Ginn & Co.

✓ Story of the Illiad, Macmillan.

Hawthorne's Tanglewood Tales, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Tales from Spenser, Macmillan.

Arabian Nights (Hale), Ginn & Co.

Gods and Heroes, Ginn & Co.

Open Sesame, Vol. II. (Selected parts), Ginn & Co.

Third Series.

Heroes of Asgard, Macmillan.

✓ Story of the Odyssey, Macmillan.

Gulliver's Travels, Ginn & Co.

Tales of Troy, Public-School Publishing Co.

Homer's Illiad, Books 1-8 (Pope), Maynard, Merrill & Co.

Adventures of Ulysses (Lamb), Ginn & Co.

Open Sesame, Vol. I (Continued), Ginn & Co.

Up and Down the Brook (Ramford), Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

• Homer, The Odyssey (Collins), J. B. Lippencott & Co., Philadelphia.

• Homer, The Illiad (Collins), J. B. Lippencott & Co., Philadelphia.

The last four books are of especial value to the teacher.

FIFTH GRADE—*First Series.*

Hiawatha, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Lays of Ancient Rome, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.; Maynard, Merrill & Co.

Black Beauty, Public-School Publishing Co.

Songs of Labor, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

King of the Golden River, Ginn & Co.

Higginson's American Explorers (pamphlets or bound volume), Lee & Shepherd, Boston.

Wake Robin (selections by teacher), Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Second Series.

— Tales from English History, Harper Brothers, N. Y.

Ten Boys on the Road from Long Ago, Ginn & Co.

Heroic Ballads, Ginn & Co.

Stories from Herodotus, Maynard, Merrill & Co.

Heart of Oak, No. 3 (two or three grades), D. C. Heath & Co.

Children's Treasury of English Song (Choice poems, fourth to seventh grades), Macmillan.

Third Series.

Tales of Chivalry, Harper Brothers, N. Y.

Magna Charta Stories, Inter-State Publishing Co., Boston.

Stories of Colonial Children, Ed. Pub. Co.

Stories of Our Country, American Book Co.

Stories of Other Lands, American Book Co.

Ballad Book, Leach, Shewell & Sanborn.

Pioneer History Stories, Public-School Publishing Co.

Book of Golden Deeds (Yonge), Macmillan.

The Foot-Path Way (Torrey), Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Several of these books are not classics, but they contain interesting historical and biographical stories which reveal the spirit of this legendary and heroic epoch, from which many of the ballads and other poems spring.

SIXTH GRADE—*First Series.*

- Grandfather's Chair, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
- The Sketch Book, Ginn & Co.; Am. Book Co.; Maynard, Merrill & Co.
- Miles Standish, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
- Snow Bound, etc., Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
- Tales of a Grandfather, Ginn & Co.
- Birds and Bees, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Second Series.

- The Christmas Carol, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.; Maynard, Merrill & Co.
- The Stories of Waverly, Macmillan.
- The Lay of the Last Minstrel, Ginn & Co.; Maynard, Merrill & Co.
- Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, Ginn & Co.; Houghton, Mifflin & Co.; Maynard, Merrill & Co.
- Hunting of the Deer, etc., Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
- Heart of Oak, No. 4, D. C. Heath & Co.
- Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics (for teacher), Macmillan.

Third Series.

- Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, Ginn & Co.
- Jason's Quest, Leach, Shewell & Sanborn.
- Ten Great Events in History, American Book Co.
- Madam How and Lady Why (Kingsley), Macmillan.
- Ivanhoe, Ginn & Co.
- Rob Roy, Ginn & Co.

SEVENTH GRADE—*First Series.*

- Evangeline, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.; Maynard, Merrill & Co.
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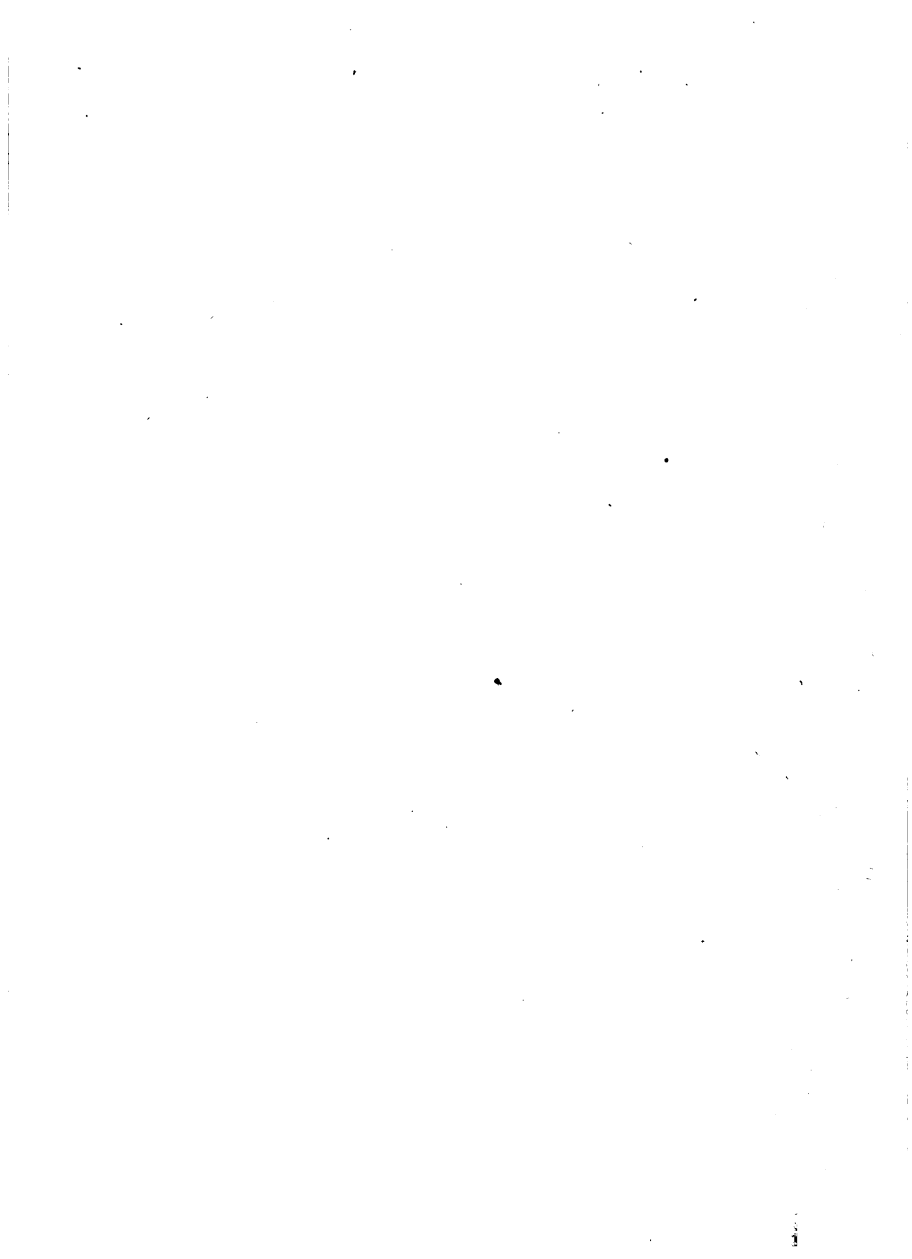
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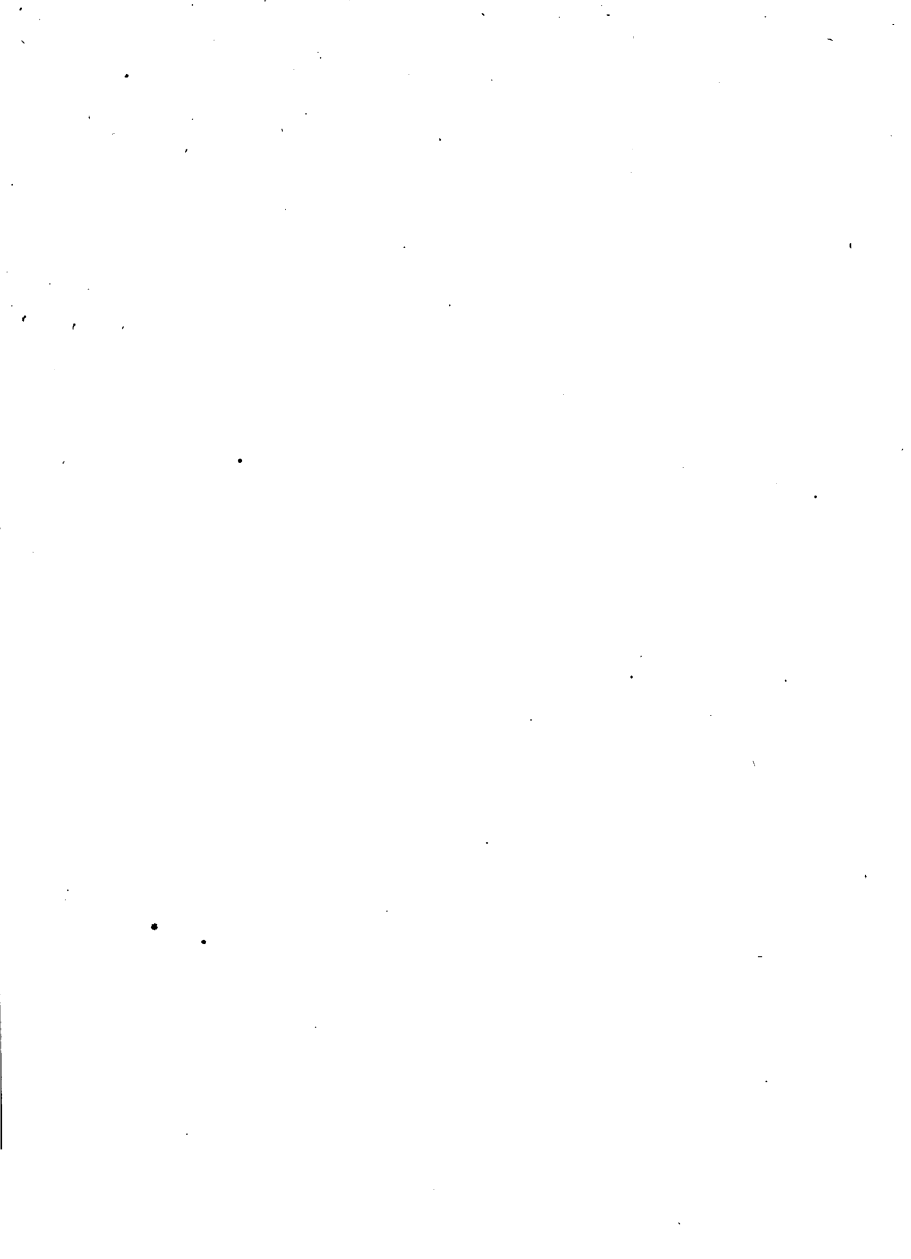
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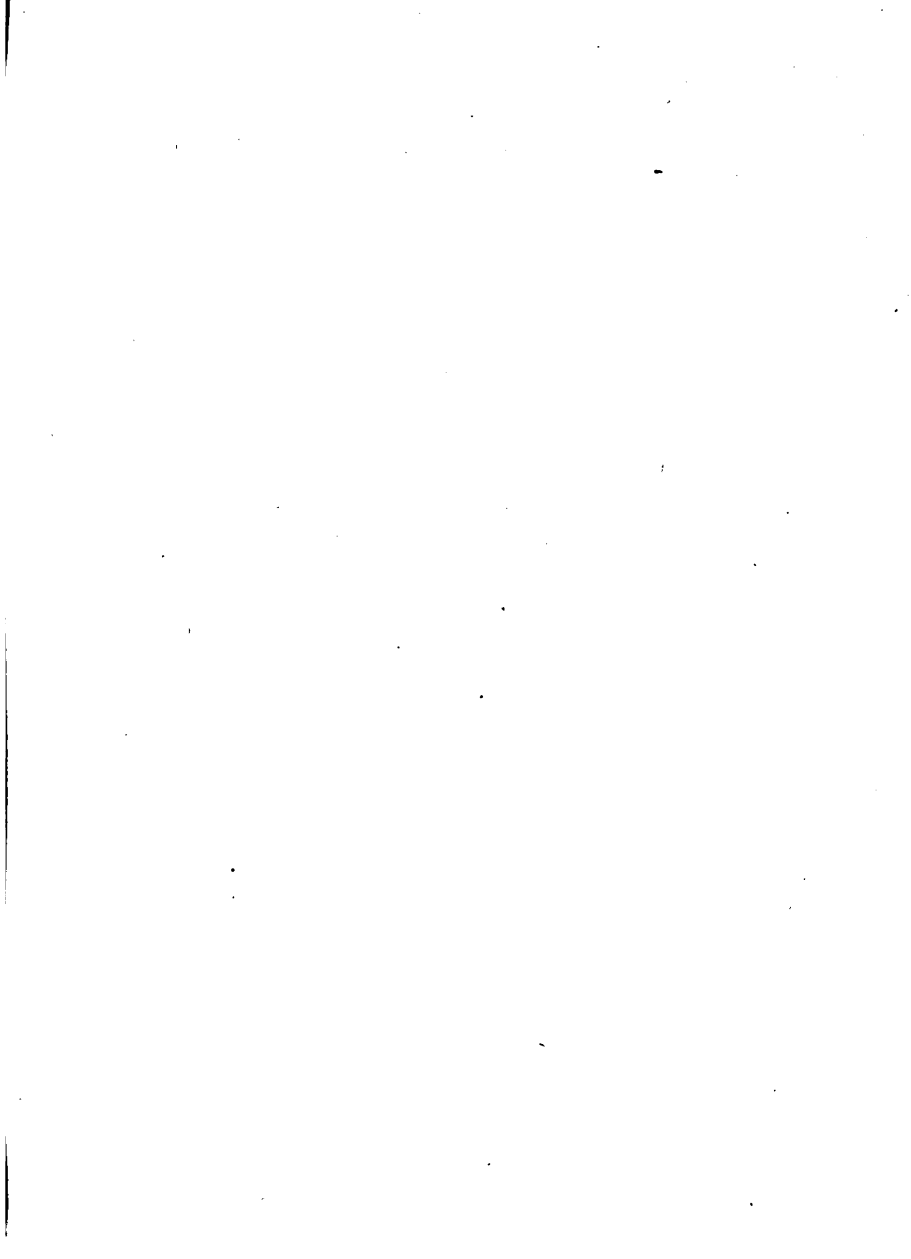
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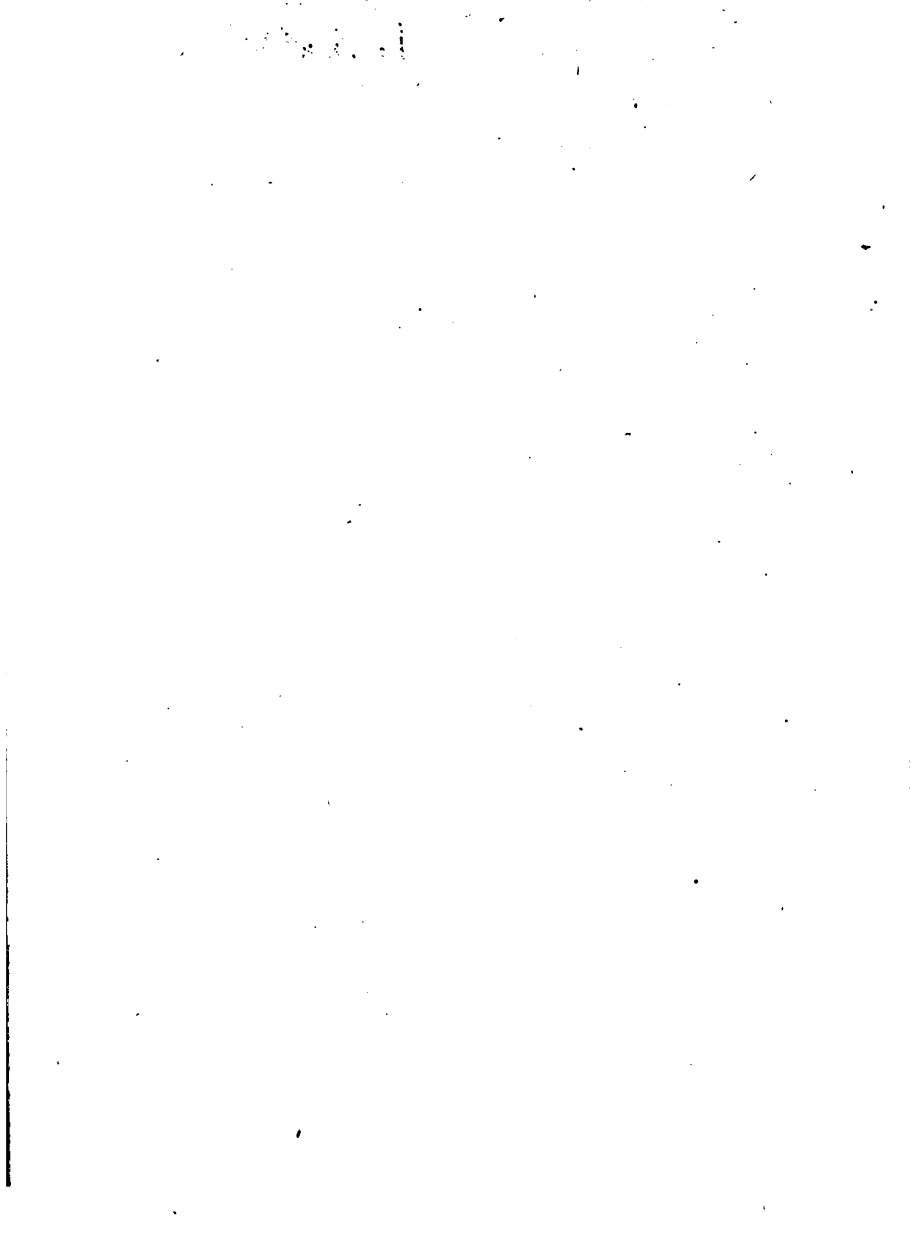
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